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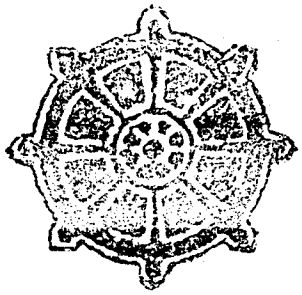

The Philosophy of the Aṭṭhakavagga

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The Philosophy of the Atthakavagga

by

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FOREWORD

The Aṭṭhakavagga is one of the five sections comprising the Suttanipāta which belongs to the Khuddakanikāya of the Pāli Canon. It is one of the most significant texts representative of the teachings of early Buddhism. Its antiquity is evident from the fact that of the five sections of the Suttanipāta, the Aṭṭhakavagga and the Pārāyanavagga are mentioned by their titles or quoted, both in other texts of the Pāli canon and in Sanskrit Buddhist texts. Also, an old commentary on these two sections has been included in the canon under the title of Niddesa.

The Aṭṭhakavagga deals briefly with a number of specific themes in Buddhist philosophy. We have attempted in the present work to elucidate those themes, by the use of modern terminology so that they would be intelligible to those who are researching into the wisdom of a bygone age.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ATTHAKAVAGGA

From a philosophical point of view, the Aṭṭhakavagga of the Suttanipāta is one of the most significant collections in the Buddhist literary tradition. There is little doubt about its antiquity, and references to its early existence are found in the Pāli, Buddhist Sanskrit and the Chinese Buddhist traditions.[1] The Aṭṭhakavagga is rich in philosophical content although its sayings are brief and require clarification and interpretation to grasp their full significance.

The verses of the Aṭṭhakavagga present ideas pregnant with philosophical meanings and the very manner in wich these ideas have been presented could easily lead to a wide veriety of interpretations. The Theravādins have preserved their traditional interpretation of the Aṭṭhakavagga in the Mahāniddesa. The doctrinal importance of the Aṭṭhakavagga in the Theravāda Buddhist tradition is seen from the fact that the Niddesa itself has been included among their canonical works. The extent to which the meaning of the key terms used in the Aṭṭhakavagga have been analysed in the Niddesa preserving their original meaning and significance, could be subjected to critical investigation. Many deviations from the original meanings seem to have occurred in the later exegetical analyses. The exclusive dependence, therefore, on the Niddesa alone is not adequate in reading the meanings

1. University of Ceylon Review, 1948, The criteria for the analysis of the Suttanipāta by Prof. N. A. Jayawickreme.

of the Aṭṭhakavagga Suttas. The key terms must be examined in the context of their usage in the Aṭṭhakavagga and compared with other usages in the canonical literature to grasp their actual philosophical significance. The Niddesa, however, is of utmost importance in reading the philosophical meanings of the Aṭṭhakavagga verses with due regard to the Theravāda tradition.

The fundamental doctrines of early Buddhism are found in the Aṭṭhakavagga in their non-scholastic, unsystematised form. Early Buddhism preaches a path to liberation, and that liberation *(Vimutti)* is conceived to be the ultimate goal of beings who pursue the way of life prescribed in Buddhism. Buddhism regards the life of ordinary mortals as one of unending conflict. Dukkha is the key word used in the Buddhist literature to denote the perpetual conflict which pervades all aspects of worldly life. Buddhism traces the causes of this conflict to a psychological origin and concludes that attachment, greed and unending thirst resulting from the lack of clear vision and penetration into the truths regarding realities of existence are the primary causes of all social and individual conflicts. The Aṭṭhakavagga clearly states the Buddhist theory of psychological and social conflict, and traces the causes of this conflict to attachment and ignorance. The way of life recommended in the Aṭṭhakavagga for the attainment of the highest perfection which is conceived to be the supreme goal of beings, is a life of detachment. It criticises the attempts of the rational metaphysicians in the quest of philosophical truth and traces the psychological origins of their divergent philosophical conclusions. The Aṭṭhakavagga emphasises the futility of indulgence in highly controversial metaphysical

speculations for the spiritual edification of human beings. It questions the efficacy of human reason in the pursuit of objectivity and truth. Many questions of philosophical interest are raised in discussing the competence of reason in the comprehension of truth and reality. Many Buddhist views on epistemological questions are presented in these discussions. The nature of human judgments, their objectivity and subjectivity, their validity and criteria, are topics on which the Buddha has expressed his opinions in the Aṭṭhakavagga.

subject: sensual pleasure

The early Buddhist attitude towards objects of sense pleasure is clearly stated in the Aṭṭhakavagga. The first Sutta of the Aṭṭhakavagga (Kāmasutta) is a clear instance of stating in brief the way in which the early Buddhists viewed the pleasures of the senses. The Kāmasutta shows that the Buddha did not deny the objects of pleasure. What the Buddha denied was that they are totally pleasurable in the sense that they are permanent bases of human pleasure. The Aṭṭhakavagga clarifies the Buddhist standpoint that *assāda* 'pleasure' cannot be permanent due not only to the very nature of its object but also to the nature of the subject. Pleasure and pain are a result of causally conditioned perceptual processes. Only *vedāna* 'sensations' can be pleasurable, painful or neutral. The aggregate of sensations is one of the five constituent aggregates of the individaul. The Buddhist analysis of the individual repeatedly reveals that not one of these aggregates has a permanent unchanging existence. Sensations are conceived to be passing mental phenomena with no permanent or lasting nature. The Kāmasutta says that the person who delights in sense pleasures undoubtedly becomes happy when his yearning for pleasures is

only vedana

gratified.[1] Here the Buddha does not deny the reality of the existence of pleasures or pleasurable objects. *Assāda* 'pleasure' is part of the real world. The Buddha has often pointed out in his psychological analyses of the sensory processes that there are objects pleasing and delightful to the senses.[2]

The Buddha points out that the external world has objects that are capable of producing attraction or repulsion in those who come into contact with them. This is illustrated in the Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhayasutta of the Majjhimanikāya thus: 'When he (whose sense organs have reached a fair degree of maturity) has seen a material object (*rūpa*) with the eye, he feels attracted to agreeable material objects (*piyarūpe rūpe sārajjati*) and feels repugnant with regard to disagreeable material objects (*appiyarūpe rūpe byāpajjati*).[3] *Anurodha* 'compliance' and *virodha* 'antipathy' are natural psychological effects of the way in which the psychophysical organism and the objects of the external world interact. The specifically Buddhist attitude towards sense pleasures comes to light in the Kāmasutta when it points out that the objects of pleasure which were capable of producing the gratification which the ordinary mortal yearns for are perishable, and therefore, could themselves turn out to be the bases of human suffering and discontent. An object which at one moment was the basis of a person's utmost delight becomes at the next moment the basis of his utmost grief. The doctrine of *tilakkhaṇa* 'the three fundamental characteristics of phenomena', which forms one of the supreme insights

1. *Sn. 766*
2. *M.I, 85*
3. *M.I, 266*

5/16 So the kamā sutta deals w/ sensual pleasure

of Buddhism, points out that all phenomena, mental and physical, have a fleeting and evanescent existence. Therefore passionate clinging to objects of pleasure results only in the production of incessant psychological conflicts. The Kāmasutta says that one who is steeped in the pleasures of the senses, who generates intense desire becomes afflicted, like a person who is pierced by an arrow when those pleasures of the senses are lost[1]. When a person mindfully cultivates detachment towards pleasures of the senses he overcomes his bondage to afflictions which are rooted in the activity of his own mind.[2] Thus the Aṭṭhakavagga introduces some of the vital aspects of Buddhist philosophy by expressing the Buddhist attitude towards pleasures of the senses and their evaluation in the Buddhist scheme of practical injunctions. The Kāmasutta shows that the ultimate aim of the Buddhist way of life is not something pertaining to the pleasures of the senses but something attainable only by their renunciation.

The Aṭṭhakavagga exalts the ideal of the *muni* 'sage' who renounces sense pleasures. The *viveka* 'solitude'that is praised in the Aṭṭhakavagga is more than a mere physical renunciation. *Viveka*, according to the Niddesa is threefold, viz. *Kāyaviveka* 'physical solitude,' meaning the physical renunciation of the comforts of a layman's living, *cittaviveka*, 'mental solitude', meaning the psychological renunciation attained at different levels of mental development and *upadhiviveka*, 'psychoethical solitude' attained by the destruction of all defilements and the substratum of rebirth.[3] The life of the *muni*

1. *Sn. 767*
2. *Sn. 771*
3. *Nd. I, 26f.*

So kamāsutta is an originator of the concept [illegible] separation from things / pleasures

is compared to the lotus which has sprung up in the muddy water but remains unsullied by it, rising above its surface. The life of renunciation which the Aṭṭhakavagga speaks of is not the renunciation of a hermit who runs away from the social life of the world but of the vigilant person who lives in the world without submitting himself to its numerous temptations. The mere act of donning the yellow robes of a hermit and subscribing to a certain pattern of religious ritual is not sufficient to become a *muni*. What is more important is his mental attitude.

The Aṭṭhakavagga philosophy of detachment implies that lasting happiness does not consist in the pursuit of material things. The *muni* ideal does not favour an attitude to life which is basically of a materialistic inclination. Buddhism conceives *sukha* 'happiness' as the goal of all human activity. The teachings of Buddhism too do not diverge from this happiness seeking principle. For the summum bonum of the Buddhists, Nirvana, is also termed the *paramasukha*[1] 'the highest bliss'. Buddhism agrees with materialistic and common sense views in holding that the attainment of the highest happiness is the goal of human beings although it differs in regard to what a person's highest happiness consists in. According to early Buddhism, as the Aṭṭhakavagga clearly expresses, the highest happiness consists in the realisation of Nirvana by the renunciation of all pleasures of the senses. The materialists, especially, and the ordinary worldlings, generally, act on the assumption that happiness consists in the gratification of the desire to enjoy sense pleasures. The Buddha differs very radically from them

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1. Dhp. 204

in pointing out that what others call happiness is viewed by the *ariyā* 'noble ones' as misery.[1] The Buddha rejected the view that *sukha* 'happiness' is confined to the sense pleasures, and while relegating the pleasures of the five senses (*pañcakāmaguṇā*) to the lowest plane of happiness, pointed out that more superior planes of happiness could be discovered in the higher stages of *Jhāna* 'trance'.[2]

One noteworthy feature of the Buddhist philosophy of detachment which often comes to light in the Aṭṭhakavagga is that it consists not merely in the detachment from material things but also detachment from all conceptual constructions. *Rāga* 'passion' results from ideas as well as from material things. Attachment to a certain ideology or view may at times even surpass in its intensity the attachment to any material thing. The Aṭṭhakavagga is very severe in its condemnation of *sandiṭṭhirāga* 'attachment to one's own view'. According to the Aṭṭhakavagga passionate clinging to material objects is only one aspect of clinging which results in individual and social conflicts. People cling equally, or even more tenaciously, to their views and ideologies (*diṭṭhi*) and also their holy vows (*sīla*) and practices (*vata*).

The Buddhist explanation of the origins of conflict in the individual and social realms is not materialisic in emphasis. According to early Buddhism an analysis of the material conditions of human life would give only a partial explanation of the origins of divers patterns of conflict. The emphasis of the Aṭṭhakavagga is more

1. *S. IV. 127*
2. *S. IV. 225f.*

on the psychological causes of conflict than on its material causes. Any attempt to explain the numerous types of conflict in terms of the material conditions of human existence alone is contrary to the teachings of early Buddhism. Without falling to the ideological extremes of materialism and idealism, Buddhism has attempted to explain all objects and events of the universe in terms of its empirical principle of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). For the Buddhist, therefore, the question whether mind is ultimately real or matter is ultimately real does not arise. Buddhism does not raise the issue in its metaphysical form as, is idealism true or is materialism true. Taking the terms mind and matter as words in our common parlance Buddhism only shifted its emphasis from matter to mind when providing explanations to events connected with human behaviour. Thus conforming to the emphasis laid in Buddhism on the psychological facts of human life the Aṭṭhakavagga traces the caues of conflict in human society to basic facts about the human mind. The analysis of individual and social conflict made in the Kalahavivādasutta of the Suttanipāta is very significant in this connection.

The question that is discussed in the Kalahavivādasutta concerns the origin of disputes, conflicts, argumentations and disagreements in human society. It also concerns the ills in an individual's life such as grief, lamentation and despair. Disputes inevitably bring about other social evils such as murder, harshness of speech, slander and so forth. The Buddha is asked about the causes of contentions and disputes, grief with lamentation in their train, pride, conceit and

slander.[1] A similar question is raised in the Sakkapañhasutta of the Dīghanikāya. Despite the desire of beings to live in peace and harmony they are seen to be living in perpetual enmity and hostility. Sakka requests the Buddha to explain the causes for such hostility and enmity.[2] Human conflicts manifest themselves in the form of quarrels between individuals even of the same caste and class, and the same family and in the form of wars between states and so on and so forth.[3] The specifically Buddhist contribution to the analysis of the origins of such conflicts is that Buddhism traces them to the psychological nature of human beings, and thus goes beyond a purely materialistic interpretation of such phenomena. The interest in Buddhism in giving such psychological analysis is determined by the Buddhist concept of mind and mental culture. According to Buddhism the paths which nature has determined for the psychological activity of human beings are not undivertible. The human mind is a dynamic realm in which the possibility for radical reforms is most evident. The Nirvana of the Buddhists which is attained by the cessation of all conflicts is a result of radical reformulation of a person's mental activities. Thus Buddhism does not favour any analysis which implies that the solution to social and psychological problems lies only in the reformulations and reorganizations brought about in the material sphere alone

The Kalahavivādasutta says that the cause of contentions and disputes and the concommitant social evils is *piyā* 'dear things'. *Piyā* are said to be rooted in *chanda* 'impelling desire'. *Chanda* is rooted in

1. *Sn. 862.*
2. *D. II, 276*
3. *M. I. 86*

sāta and *asāta* 'the pleasant and the unpleasant'. *Sāta* and *asāta* are caused by *phassa* 'sensory contact'. In the Kalahavivādasutta the Buddha is seen delving deeper and deeper into the psychological springs of human action in the explanation of matters connected with individual and social behaviour, realising the uniqueness of the sphere of activity with which he is dealing. Here the origins of human conflict are traced to sense perceptions and the complexity of mental acts that follow from it. According to Buddhism the material components of the process of sensory activity may remain as they are, yet without the resultant psychological processes such as *chanda*. Material things may not be a hindrance to a person's happiness when the proper mental attitude is cultivated. Buddhism considers the cultivation of this mental attitude which consists mainly in the development of the mind by *satipaṭṭhāna* 'techniques of meditation' as the *ekāyanamagga* 'the singular means' of attaining the incomparable happiness which overcomes all manner of conflicts.

According to the Aṭṭhakavagga conflict is also an inevitable result of divergence in human beliefs. The Aṭṭhakavagga testifies to the fact that there existed a multiplicity of philosophical beliefs during the time of the Buddha. Debates were openly held in the midst of large gatherings with the sole intention of proving one's own standpoint correct and defeating the standpoint of the opponent. The Buddha, as represented in the Pāli canonical literature was a firm critic of metaphysical speculation. He was an empiricist in his approach to philosophical problems, and firmlp disapproved of any attempts to use purely rational methods in constructing complex systems of philosophy

which go beyond the limits of verification and experience. In the Nikāyas, the Buddha has condemned the attempts of other contemporary thinkers to give categorical answers to certain philosophical questions. The Nikāyas mention ten philosophical questions regarding the nature of the individual and the world which the Buddha is said to have left unanswered. [1] The answers given by different teachers during the Buddha's time to such questions are described in the Pāli Nikāyas as *paccekasacca* 'individual truths'.[2]

It is interesting to inquire into the way in which early Buddhism analysed the origins of *diṭṭhi* 'philosophical views'. According to the Brahmajālasutta of the Dīghanikāya the diversity of *diṭṭhi* is a natural result of perception and therefore has a psychological origin. The Brahmajālasutta enumerates as many as sixty-two divergent philosophical views and traces their origin to *phassa* 'sensory contact'. [3] The Aṭṭhakavagga throws more light on the analysis made in the Brahmajālasutta. In the Cūlaviyūhasutta of the Aṭṭhakavagga the question is raised as to why different thinkers put forward divergent views about truth, widely disagreeing among themselves without expressing agreement on a single truth. The question is raised as to whether it is due to the existence of a diversity of truth or due to the rationalisations of different thinkers. [4] The answer to this question which follows in the same sutta is very significant regarding the Buddhist analysis of the origins

1. *M. I, 426f.*; *D. I, 187f.*
2. Sn. 824; A. II, 41; A. V, 29. The significance of the term is adequately discussed by Prof. K, N. Jayatilake in his Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge, p. *354f.*
3. *D. I, 42.*
4. *Sn. 885*

of disagreement in philosophical circles. It is said that there do not exist many and divers truths in the world apart from *saññā*. People employ reason in constructing various views and make judgments of truth and error.[1] The significance of this reply depends largely on the meaning of the word *saññā*. The analysis given in the Niddesa seems to be of little help in this connection as the emphasis in the Niddesa exegesis is on the ethical import of terms used in the original text. The following is an instance where the word *saññā* is explained in the Niddesa: '*Saññañ ca diṭṭhiñ ca ye aggahesuṃ te ghaṭṭayantā vicaranti loke ti ye saññaṃ gaṇhanti, kāmasaññaṃ byāpādasaññaṃ vihiṃsāsaññaṃ te saññāvasena ghaṭṭenti*' - (Nd. I, 207). Here *saññā* takes an ethical meaning as idea of sense desire, idea of malevolence and idea of injury. Even in the context of the passage quoted from the Niddesa the explanation of the word *saññā* does not seem to be adequate. The word *saññā* occurs in the Aṭṭhakavagga mostly in the sense of ideas of sensory origin.

Taking *saññā* in that wider sense it is reasonable to assert that the Aṭṭhakavagga makes very significant observations about the nature of our judgments of truth and error. The first point that it makes is that our judgments are primarily based on *saññā* 'the ideas of sensory origin'. *Saññā* stands for the purely subjective, and subjective experiences can easily be erroneously described, when they are verbally formulated, as views and elevated to the position of objective truths. *Saññā*, according to the Buddhist teaching, is changeable. It is a subjective state in which changes could be brought about by the application of parti-

1. *Sn. 886*

Jhanas as dispating saññā 13/16

cular modes of training. *Sikkhā ekā saññā uppajjanti sikkhā ekā saññā nirujjhanti* 'with training some ideas arise and with training some ideas cease' (D. I, 181). The Poṭṭhapādasutta discusses how this change is effected by a process of training consisting of Jhānic meditation, which gradually reduces *saññā* to subtler and subtler forms until it completely ceases. This is described in the Poṭṭhapādasutta as *abhisaññānirodha*. The Brahmajālasutta in discussing the various views held by samaṇas and brāhmaṇas shows clearly that some of these views were based purely on their subjective experiences. These experiences may be due to certain Jhānic exercises that they have undergone, and variations in the nature of experiences are admitted in the Buddhist analysis as pointed out in the Poṭṭhapādasutta. The Brahmajālasutta says that an ascetic or a Brāhmaṇa by means of ardour, of exertion, of application, of earnestness, of right reflection, attains to such concentration of mind that when his mind is so concentrated he dwells experiencing a finite world. He says thus: 'finite is this world with a boundary right round, because I by means of ardour of exertion. . . dwell experiencing a finite world. By this I know that this world is finite and with a boundary right round'.[1] Here is a clear

example of subjective experiences in Jhanas

1 *Idha bhikkhave ekacco samaṇo vā brāhmaṇo vā ātappam anvāya padhānam anvāya anuyogam anvāya appamādam anvāya sammāmanasikāram anvāya tathārūpaṃ cetosamādhiṃ phusati yathā samāhite citte antasaññī lokasmiṃ viharati. So evam āha: Antavā ayaṃ loko parivaṭumo. Taṃ kissa hetu? Ahaṃ hi ātappam anvāya... tathārūpiṃ cetosamādhiṃ phusāmi yathā samāhite citte antasaññī lokasmiṃ viharāmi. Iminā-p'āhaṃ etaṃ jānāmi yathā antavā ayaṃ loko parivaṭumo ti.* (*D.I, 22*)

14/16

example of how philosophical conclusions were reached by the thinkers of the time. Some of them had an experiential basis for their conclusions and projected their subjective experiences to the objective world and misinterpreted their experience in elevating it to the status of an objective truth. There is evidence in the Brahmajālasutta that even some theistic conclusions were based on such subjective experiences. The Buddha did not contest the fact that they actually possessed some experience but only criticised their attempt to grasp that experience as the objective reality. Conviction of thinkers on truth and error was based primarily on such experiential content of the mind as the Mahākammavibhaṅgasutta of the Majjhimanikāya clearly illustrates. This sutta enumerates four kinds of dogmatic judgments regarding the law of *kamma* and rebirth made by thinkers who depended on their individual Jhānic insight.[1] The Buddha says that by Jhānic insight one may see a person of bad moral conduct reborn in a woeful state of existence and thereby conclude that there are effects of bad conduct and that everyone who indulges in bad conduct will be reborn in a woeful state of existence. Another person with similar Jhānic insight may have an experience contrary to the former as for instance seeing a person of good conduct being born in a woeful state of existence in the next birth, and thereby conclude that there are no effects of good conduct, and that all those who indulge in good conduct are reborn in woeful states of existence. People cling very firmly to their subjective experiences and make judgments about truth and error. The Buddha points out in the

Pemaratana, 9/10

1 M. III, 211.

Pemaratana, so-here may be a link/clue to the B's dissatisfaction w/ Alara-Kalama's technique

sutta how erroneous conclusions could be reached by persons who depend exclusively on their limited and subjective experiential content of the mind and attempt to interpret that as the complete truth. Thus while recognising the validity of the data of extrasensory perception the Buddha pointed out that mistaken conclusions could be drawn depending on such data just as mistaken conclusions could be drawn about any matter of fact depending on the data of the five senses.

The dogmatic adherence to views results from the conviction that one's knowledge is complete, and that the whole truth about the world could be described on the basis of one's ideas and experience alone. The Duṭṭhaṭṭhakasutta says that the dogmatist himself claims the highest perfection for his own view and asserts his opinion on the basis of his conviction. What precedes his assertions is the knowledge he has gleaned from his experience. What he asserts conforms to his convictions.[1]

In the Buddha's explanation of philosophical disputes he shows that they result basically from psychological facts. Their origin is to be found in a person's sensory and extra-sensory experiences. The Buddha considers the dogmatism of the thinkers a hindrance to mental peace. He therefore recommends the full and complete understanding of such psychological phenomena as *saññā*, *phassa* and *ñāṇa*, and without dependence on those phenomena, the attainment of complete detachment and liberation of the mind. The Aṭṭhakavagga

1 Sayaṃ samattāni pakubbamāno yathā hi jāneyya tathā vadeyya (Sn. 781).

says: 'Let one cross over the flood by the complete understanding of *saññā*' (*saññaṃ pariññā vitareyya oghaṃ* - Sn. 779); 'having completely understood sensory contact and unattached' (*phassaṃ* pariññāya anānugiddho - Sn. 778); 'He does not have excessive dependence even on *ñāṇa*,' (*ñāṇe pi so nissayaṃ no karoti* - Sn. 800).

The nature of the expression of disagreement in belief by the thinkers at the time of the Buddha is clearly shown in the Aṭṭhakavagga. The Buddha's emphasis is mainly on beliefs of truthseekers who were preoccupied with the inquiry into what *parama* 'ultimate reality' or *sacca* 'truth' was and what an individual's *visuddhi* 'absolute purity' and *mokkha* 'liberation' consisted in. Such enquiries had a relevance mainly to the moral and spiritual aspects of a person's life. The Pasūrasutta describes the disagreement among thinkers on such matters thus: 'They say that absolute purity is theirs alone. They do not say that there is absolute purity in the teachings of others. Whatever (path or teaching or belief) they depend on, they claim that it is the most excellent and thus separately hold divers individual truths.[1] The Cūḷaviyūhasutta says: 'Experts make divers assertions, each clinging dogmatically to his own view. They say: 'Whoever knows thus has known the truth. Whoever despises this, is imperfect.'[2] They make judgments about truth and error, but widely disagree in their judgments.

Judeo-Christian

1 Idh'eva suddhiṃ iti vādiyanti
nāññesu dhammesu visuddhiṃ āhu
yaṃ nissitā tattha subhaṃ vadānā paccekasaccesu puthū
niviṭṭhā (Sn. 824)

2 Sakaṃ sakaṃ diṭṭhi paribbasānā viggayha nānā kusalā vadanti
yo evaṃ jānāti sa vedi dhammaṃ idaṃ paṭikkosaṃ akevalī
so (Sn. 878)

The Cūḷaviyūhasutta says: 'What one asserted to be true and real, others say is meaningless and false. Thus they enter into dispute and debate'.[1] The Mahā viyūhasutta says: 'Each one asserts that one's own view is perfect, and that the belief of the other person is inferior. Thus they enter into dispute. They judge their own conclusions to be true'.[2]

The Buddha was highly critical of this intolerance which was displayed by the thinkers of his time. Such intolerance, according to the Buddha, was utterly unwarranted, apart from the fact that from an ethical point of view it was very unbecoming of a morally good person. In the Cūḷaviyūhasutta the Buddha speaks with sarcasm of such intolerant dogmatists. 'If by reason of not approving of another person's teaching one becomes a fool or a beast, then all (these dogmatists) are fools and persons of much inferior wisdom. For they equally strongly cling to dogmatic beliefs'.[3] On the other hand, 'if by reason of holding to one's own dogmatic belief one becomes a person of absolutely pure wisdom, skill and knowledge, then none among them is of inferior wisdom. For they have equally clung to dogmatic beliefs.'[4]

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1 Yam āhu saccaṃ tathiyan ti eke,
tam āhu aññe pi tucchaṃ musā ti
evam pi viggayha vivādiyanti . . . (Sn.883)

2 Sakaṃ hi dhammaṃ paripunnam āhu,
aññassa dhammaṃ pana hīnam āhu
evam pi viggayha vivādiyanti
sakaṃ sakam sammutim āhu saccaṃ (Sn. 904)

3 Parassa ce dhammam anānujānaṃ bālo mago hoti nihīnapañño
sabbe va bālā sunihīnapaññā sabb'e vi'me diṭṭhi paribbasānā
(Sn. 880)

4 Sandiṭṭhiyā ce pana vīvadātā saṃsuddhapaññā kusalā mutīmā
na tesaṃ koci parihīnapañño diṭṭhī hi tesaṃ tathā samattā
(Sn. 881)

12/16 Two main harmful consequences

In the Aṭṭhakavagga the Buddha puts forward the view that the lack of tolerance in the realm of views leads to many harmful consequences. First it (1) is a hindrance to the furtherance of one's own knowledge, as one becomes emotionally involved in the belief that one already holds. One becomes a prey to one's preconceived notions and this leads to intellectual stagnation. Secondly the emotions bring about (2) many consequences which are morally harmful. Emotional attachment to dogmatic views results in absolute disregard for objectivity. It also disrupts the harmony of social relations and brings about results which are socially harmful.

From the Buddhist explanation of the origin of dogmatic beliefs the ethical and practical conclusion follows that such dogmas should not be clung to. The dogmas are based primarily on the subjective experiences of individuals. In the majority of cases the experiences differ very widely from each other and the experience of any one individual is not at all sufficient to come to a conclusion about objective truth.

The aṭṭhakavagga also discusses the role that reason plays in the assertions made by dogmatists. The Buddha on many occasions denied the competence of pure reason to comprehend ultimate reality. The Aṭṭhakavagga says that the diversity of views regarding the nature of ultimate truth is also due to the abuse of reason. Judgments about truth and error were pronounced by the thinkers of the time by employing reason.[1] The Buddha had very definite views on the role of reason in the

1 Takkañ ca diṭṭhīsu pakappayitvā saccaṃ musā ti dvayadhammam āhu (Sn. 886)

search for truth. The Brahmajālasutta includes among the dogmas which the Buddha rejected those based on pure reason as well. The Brahmajālasutta says that out of the four schools of samaṇas and brāhmaṇas who were eternalists and held that the soul and the world are eternal the fourth consisted of rationalists who depended on pure reason alone.[1]

The observation of the early Buddhists on the role of pure reason in philosophical inquiry is clearly stated in the Sandakasutta. Pointing out the shortcomings of pure reason Ānanda says to Sandaka: 'Here again Sandaka, a certain teacher is a rationalist an investigator, he teaches the doctrine on a system of his own devising, beaten out by reasoning and based on investigation. The teaching of one who is a rationalist, an investigator is sometimes well reasoned and some times ill-reasoned. It sometimes is true and sometimes is false'.[2] The philosophical conclusions arrived at by a process of reasoning are according to the Buddhist view unsatisfactory on two grounds. (1) First, the process of reasoning may consist of flaws in the reasoning and thus lead to ill-reasoned (logically false or invalid) conclusions. (2) Secondly, the fact that someone

1 Catutthe ca bhonto samanabrāhmanā kim āgamma kim ārabbha sassatavādā sassatam attānañ ca lokañ ca paññāpenti. Idha bhikkhave ekacco samano vā brāhmano vā takkī hoti vīmamsī. So takkapariyāhatam vīmamsānucaritam sayam-paṭibhānam evam āha: sassato attā ca loko ca,.. (D. I, 16).

2 Puna ca param Sandaka idh ekacco satthā takkī hoti vīmaṃsī, so takkapariyāhataṃ vīmaṃsānucaritaṃ sayam-paṭibhānaṃ dhammaṃ deseti. Takkissa kho pana Sandaka vīmaṃsissa sutakkitam pi hoti duttakkitam pi hoti. Tathā pi hoti aññathā pi hoti (M.I, 520).

has come to a well reasoned (logically valid) conclusion, avoiding all flaws of reasoning does not guarantee the truth of the conclusion. Although the reasoning process is perfectly flawless the conclusion may be contrary to fact. For according to the Buddhist theory of knowledge what is known to be true must be verifiable in experience. Reasoning has a role to play only within the limits of experience.

The Aṭṭhakavagga expresses the early Buddhist view that reason involves itself in deep and interminable conflict when it goes beyond phenomena to seek their ultimate ground. Philosophical conflict results from the search for truths beyond all empirical observation employing human reason outside its legitimate limits.

In coming to conclusions about reality the views of thinkers are in most cases affected by their emotions. Logic only aids them to rationalise their emotions their inclinations and propensities, likes and dislikes. The Aṭṭhakavagga says that when a conclusion reached by someone is a rationalisation it becomes exceedingly difficult for him to give up that conclusion. The Buddha says that a person finds it difficult to give up his own view when he is led by impelling desire and convinced according to his inclination. He would declare in accordance with his conviction.[1] A factor which adds to the failure in the objectivity of rational conclusions is the influence of human emotions on such conclusions. Thinkers as the Buddha saw, expressed mere rationalisations, based largely on their

1 Sakaṃ hi diṭṭhiṃ katthaṃ accayeyya
chandānunīto ruciyā niviṭṭho
Sayaṃ samattāni pakubbamāno yathā hi jāneyya tathā vadeyya
(Sn. 781)

when some people can't give up their conclusions
it may well be a rationalization

personal likes and dislikes, interests and inclinations in the guise of well reasoned objective conclusions. The Aṭṭhakavagga says that the passionate clinging to views results from the fact that the views themselves are a product of rationalisation. Emotional factors often influence the judgments of value pronounced by human beings. The Buddha says that when someone sees personal advantage from things seen, heard or cognised, or from holy vow or practice, one clings passionately to that alone and sees everything else as inferior.[1] The Duṭṭhaṭṭhakasutta says that those who enter into verbal conflict regarding philosophical conclusions do so, not merely because they believe them to be true; there are persons who are led by their passions and emotions. The Duṭṭhaṭṭhakasutta says that when some thinkers make philosophical assertions they do so believing them to be true while others speak merely with malicious intentions.[2]

What incites a person to cling passionately to his own view is more often his consciousness and esteem of the self, rather than the consciousness of truth. The dogmatist wishes to safeguard his view at whatever cost because the refutation of his views means to him defeat and self degradation. The Aṭṭhakavagga says that when people cling passionately to their views, emotions which compel them to do so are their pride, conceit and esteem of the self, their notions of equality, inferiority and

1 Yad attani passati ānisaṃsaṃ diṭṭhe sute sīlavate mute vā tad eva so tattha samuggahāya nihīnato passati sabbaṃ aññaṃ (Sn. 797)

2 Vadanti ve duṭṭhamanā pi eke atho pi ve saccamanā vadanti (Sn. 780)

superiority. Measures such as equality, inferiority and superiority are used with reference to beliefs held by oneself and others. One person judges another who holds the same view as himself as equal in wisdom, while judging others who reject his view as men of inferior wisdom. He enthrones himself in the realm of philosophical beliefs and speaks contemptuously of others.[1] The debators who entered into conflict basing themselves on different assumptions on the nature of reality were prompted by inner passions such as their desire for praise and fame.[2] Those who debate have in their minds the purely subjective measurements of equality, inferiority and superiority.[3]

The Aṭṭhakavagga discusses the consequences of holding dogmatically to beliefs. According to the Aṭṭhakavagga, truth is not something about which debates can arise. It is only the emotional and dogmatic adherence to views that produce argumentation and debate. The Buddhist view is that involvement in such disputations is a serious impediment to right understanding and hence spiritual development. Complete freedom, in the Buddhist view, results only from detachment. This detachment has to be effected not only from the objects of the five senses but also from those of the mind, the percepts and concepts of the mind. The perceptual and coneptual involvement of the individual is considered in the Buddhist psychology as the process of being overwhelmed by *papañca*.

1 Atisāraditṭhiyā so samatto mānena matto paripunnamānī sayam eva sāmaṃ manasābhisitto diṭṭhī hi sā tassa tathā samattā (Sn. 889)

2 Vadanti te aññasitā kathojjaṃ pasaṃsakāmā kusalā vadānā (Sn. 825).

3 Samo visesī uda vā nihīno yo maññati so vivadetha tena (Sn.842)

Detachment in this wider sense is necessary because attachment to even one's own view prevents one from understanding things as they are.

Early Buddhism sometimes traces the perpetual conflict in society to *papañcasaññāsankhā* 'ideas of perceptual and conceptual obsession'. Papañcasaññāsankhā denotes the psychological reaction of the individual to all his perceptual affections and conceptual accumulations. The *anusaya* 'dormant passions of the mind' such as *taṇhā* 'craving', *diṭṭhi* 'dogmatism' and *māna* 'conceit' are concommitant with *papañca*. The Sakkapañhasutta of the Dīghanikāya in its analysis of individual and social conflicts and ills traces them to *papañcasaññāsankhā*. The term '*papañcasankhā*' is used also in the Kalahavivādasutta of the Aṭṭhakavagga in a similar context. There is no doubt that the detachment advocated by the early Buddhists has an evidently psychological emphasis, and that it is itself a practical and ethical conclusion derived from a deep analysis of psychological facts about human beings. For mental peace and calm one needs to be detached from all ideas and concepts and therefore from all dogmatic views.

Papañcasankhā as indicator of textual age?

The doctrine of the Buddha points out that disputes of two kinds can arise in society. Both kinds of disputes have a psychological origin. They are rooted in the dormant passions of the human mind. One originates from passion for pleasurable sensations derived from objects of the material world. The other from the passion for ideas and concepts, philosophical views and ideologies. The Mahādukkhakkhandasutta of the Majjhimanikāya (M. I, 86) emphasises the nature of the

conflicts arising from the former and the Aṭṭhakavagga emphasises the nature of the conflicts arising from the latter (sandiṭṭhirāga).

The Buddha's codemnation of dogmatic views as repeatedly found in the Aṭṭhakavagga is due not only to his insight into the nature of their origin but also due to an understanding of their consequences. The Buddha considered passions, of whatever kind they are, as impediments to the progress towards Nirvana. The dogmatist urged by his esteem for the self passionately clings to his dogma, and enters into debate with other persons. In this process the weapon he uses is logic and reasoning. In case his opponent, with logic and reasoning surpassing his own, vanquishes him in argument he becomes utterly frustrated. He even becomes enraged. The Pasurasutta shows how dogmatists condemn each other as fools and enter into verbal disputations each desiring his own fame.[1] Engaged in verbal disputations in the midst of gatherings one becomes vexed in one's quest for praise. In defeat he becomes downcast, and looking for the flaws of others he becomes enraged by the blames (of others).[2] When he is judged to have been defeated in debate he laments and grieves and worries that he has been overcome.[3]

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1 Te vādakāmā parisaṃ vigayha bālaṃ dahanti mithu aññamaññaṃ Vadanti te aññasitā kathojjaṃ pasaṃsakāmā kusalā vadānā (Sn. 825).

2 Yutto kathāyaṃ parisāya majjhe pasaṃsamicchaṃ vinighāti hoti apāhatasmiṃ pana manku hoti nindāya so kuppati randhamesī (Sn. 826).

3 Yam assa vādaṃ parihīnam āhu apāhataṃ paṅhavimaṃsakāse paridevati socati hīnavādo upaccagā man ti anutthunāti (Sn. 828).

All these consequences follow because people enter into such disputations with preconceived notions, with no regard for objectivity and truth, urged merely by their inner emotions and passions. Any attack on their view is for them an attack on their ego, and when their opinions are really questioned their ego is invariably hurt. It is this psychological truth about the nature of dogmatic adherence to views that is very well analysed in the Aṭṭhakavagga.

Pride and conceit, emotions which prompt people to cling to the views which they judge to be perfect, were considered by the Buddha as serious impediments to right understanding and hence to spiritual progress. He who is praised in the midst of a gathering for having successfully defended his view may be thrilled with joy and be much elated in mind, for having achieved his purpose. The Buddha says that elation itself is the ground of his vexation, for pride and conceit are serious impediments to spiritual progress.[1]

The Buddha repeatedly condemns argumentation and debate purely for the sake of promoting the ego. The ideal of a *muni* 'sage' put forward in the Aṭṭhakavagga suggests that the *muni* is free from all obstacles as he does not enter into controversies which have arisen.[2] For the person with spiritual excellence there is no view about the various existences. He has no emotions by

1 Pasaṃsito vā pana tattha hoti akkhāya vādaṃ parisāya majjhe so hassati unnamaticca tena pappuyya taṃ atthaṃ yathā mano ahū yā unnati sā'ssa vighātabhūmi mānātimānaṃ vadate paneso etam pi disvā na vivādayetha na hi tena suddhiṃ kusalā vadanti (Sn. 829–30).

2 Vādañ ca jātaṃ muni no upeti tasmā munī natthikhilo kuhiñci (Sn. 780).

which he is urged to grasp various dogmas.[1] According to the Buddha, when the mind is freed from passions, all disputations cease.[2] Those who have loosened the bond of dogmatism and do not have attachment to anything in the world have no speculative views.[3] The noble one who has transcended the limits of mundane existence has no grasping after knowing or seeing. He delights neither in passion nor in dispassion. For him there is nothing here, grasped as the highest.[4] The early Buddhist attitude towards philosophical views was just one aspect of the general philosophy of detachment preached by the Buddha. The Buddha's admonition to those intent on purity is to discard all dogmatic views and also to free oneself of all notions of measurement such as equality, superiority and inferiority.[5] The *muni*, according to the Aṭṭhakavagga, has no clinging to notions of self or ego. He does not depend even on knowledge. He does not take sides in the midst of controversy. He has no dogmatic views.[6]

1 Dhonassa hi natthi kuhiñ ci loke pakappitā diṭṭhi bhavābhavesu māyañ ca mānañ ca pahāya dhono sa kena gaccheyya anūpayo so (Sn. 786).

2 Upayo hi dhammesu upeti vādaṃ anūpayaṃ kena kathaṃ vadeyya attaṃ nirattaṃ na hi tassa atthi adhosi so diṭṭhim idheva sabbā (Sn. 787).

3 Na kappayanti na purekkharonti accantasuddhī ti na te vadanti ādānagantham gathitam visajja āsam na kubbanti kuhiñ ci loke (Sn. 794).

4 Sīmātigo brāhmaṇo tassa natthi ñatvā va disvā va samuggahītaṃ na rāgarāgī na virāgaratto tass idha natthi param uggahitaṃ (Sn. 795).

5 Diṭṭhim pi lokasmiṃ na kappayeyya ñāṇena vā silavatena vā pi samo ti attānam anūpaneyya hīno na maññetha visesī vā pi (Sn. 799).

6 Attam pahāya anupādiyāno ñāne pi so nissayam no karoti sa ve viyattesu na vaggasārī diṭṭhim pi so na pacceti kiñ ci (Sn. 800).

27/16 The muni as a lotus

The *muni* is not attached to things of the world in their gross from as physical things. Nor is he attached to them in their subtler from as sense-data, or ideas of sense (*diṭṭha, sutta, muta*). He is like the lotus untainted by the water in which it has sprung up.[1]

According to the Buddhist analysis the world is perceived by us with the aid of the senses. The different senses convey to us the various data of the physical world and the Aṭṭhakavagga classifies them all under the wide categories *diṭṭha* 'seen', *suta* 'heard' and *muta* 'cognised' Detachment from them results in the discarding of all dogmatic views. It is the *diṭṭha, suta* and *muta* (the perceptual content of our minds) which provide the raw material for our dogmatic views. One who adopts the Buddhist life of *viveka* 'solitude' is completely detached from them and therefore does not make use of this raw material to construct the more complex dogmas.[2] The Brāhmaṇa who has transcended all limits has no grasping after storing his mind with such raw material. That is why he does not cling to dogmas.[3]

The same attitude that the Buddha recommends towards dogmatic views is also recommended towards *sīla* 'holy vows' and *vata* 'holy practices' adopted by seekers after truth and purity. *sīla* and *vata* are also impediments to spiritual progress if they are clung to. In the

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1 Udabindu yathā pi pokkhare padume vāri yathā na limpati evaṃ muni nopalimpati yadidaṃ diṭṭhasutammutesu vā (Sn.812).

2 Tassīdha diṭṭhe va sute mute vā pakappitā natthi anū pi saññā (Sn. 802).

3 Sa sabbadhammesu visenibhūto yaṃ kiñ ci diṭṭhaṃ va sutaṃ mutaṃ vā (Sn. 793).

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Aṭṭhakavagga the Buddha includes *sīlabbata* also along with *diṭṭha*, *suta* and *muta* as things to be discarded to facilitate spiritual progress.

The Māgandhiyasutta of the Aṭṭhakavagga brings to light a very significant point of Buddhism regarding its teaching on *diṭṭhi* 'views', *suti* 'revelation', *sīla* 'holy vows' and *vata* 'holy practices'. This sutta shows that only dogmatic clinging to such things impedes spiritual progress, but not that they have no role to play in the process of spiritual progress. The Buddha says that it is not by *diṭṭhi*, *suti*, *ñāṇa*, *sīla*, and *vata* that one attains visuddhi 'purification'. Also it is not by the absence of them. It is by taking them only as a means and not grasping them as ends in themselves that one attains absolute purity.[1] The Alagaddūpamasutta of the Majjhimanikāya presents the same doctrine by the simile of the raft (kullūpama).[2]

In the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddhists *Sammādiṭṭhi* 'right view' appears as the first item. A distinction is made in the canonical literature itself between *sammādiṭṭhi* 'right view' and *micchādiṭṭhi* 'wrong view'. So the value of *diṭṭhi* as a means to spiritual progress is not unrecognised. In the same way the Buddha's word has a role to play as *suti*. The Buddhist *sīla* 'moral precepts' and *vata* 'vows' serve as means to the attainment of the Buddhist goal. The Buddha condemns only the attitude of some thinkers who took them as ends in themselves.

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1 Na diṭṭhiyā na sutiyā na ñānena sīlabbaten'āpi na suddhim āha
adiṭṭhiyā assutiyā aññānā asīlatā abbatā no'pi tena
ete ca nissajja anuggahāya santo anissāya bhavaṃ na jappe (Sn. 839).

2 M. I, 134f.

29/16

A question that arises from the statements made in the Aṭṭhakavagga regarding our judgments about truth and error is whether or not early Buddhism had a body of truths to assert. Some of the statements made by the Buddha may give one the impression that he was an agnostic or a sceptic. The Aṭṭhakavagga says that a sage is not prone to enter into controversies about truth and error. The multiplicity of conclusions on the nature of truth and reality in the contemporary philosophical background was undoubtedly very perplexing to any inquirer into them. There is sufficient evidence to conclude that contemporary scepticism was a result of the intellectual confusion caused by a multiplicity of views.[1] The Buddha on inquiry into the divers views declares that they are mere assertions of individual opinions (*paccekasacca*). He denied that mutually contradictory assertions about any matter of fact could be true together.[2] He says that the truth is one (about any matter of fact) and that disagreement is resolved when that truth is known.[3] Thus unlike the sceptics, he did not deny the validity of knowledge or the knowability of true propositions. He was only critical of the means by which conclusions about truth and error were drawn. The Buddha admitted that there are some questions about reality which could be categorically answered (*Ekansa-vyākaraṇīyapañha*) while there were others which have to be dismissed altogether due to the very nature of the questions (*Thapanīyapañha=avyākata*).

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1 Prof. K. N. Jayatillake, 'Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge p. 110 f.

2 Na h'eva saccāni bahūni nānā (Sn. 886).

3 Ekaṃ hi saccaṃ na dutīyam atthi yasmiṃ pajā no vivade pajānaṃ (Sn. 884).

According to early Buddhism the lack of unanimity on truth and error may result from an incomplete and partial knowledge of facts. The moment one rushes to a conclusion on the basis of a fragment of experience one ceases to be intelligent. True and scientific knowledge can be attained only by a systematisation of the data of observation and experiment. According to early Buddhism this is true not only of the data of sensory experience but also of the data of extra-sensory experience (*abhiññā*). Conflict may also result from lack of objectivity due to personal prejudices and preconceived notions. Finally conflict may result from the employment of reason for the solution of questions which are beyond all human experience. The last of them, the Buddha considers to be a very prominent field in which interminable conflict is bound to perpetuate.

The teachings of the Aṭṭhakavagga probably belong to the earliest stratum of Buddhist thought. There is very little evidence of the doctrines of Buddhism having undergone systematisation and formulation by the time the Aṭṭhakavagga verses were composed. The fundamental teachings of Buddhism are introduced in the Aṭṭhakavagga without the aid of stereotyped formulae which are characteristic of the later stratum of Buddhist literature. It gives ample testimony to the fact that the earliest teachings of Buddhism did not deviate from the path of empiricism and that hardly anything is to be found amongst them which may be termed esoteric.

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CHAPTER V

THE BUDDHIST CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE

It has already been pointed out in the previous chapters that the teaching of the Buddha is intended to produce a certain kind of knowledge. The knowledge so produced is supposed to bring about man's liberation from suffering (*vimutti*). The self transformation produced by the teachings is ultimately a consequence of the awakening of knowledge rather than the awakening of faith. This knowledge is meant to bring about a radical behavioural change which has important consequences for the individual as well as the society with which such an individual interacts. Buddhism makes use of a variety of terms when referring to different forms and levels of human cognitive activity. An examination of the distinctive meaning attached to each cognitive term used in Buddhism itself throws much light on its epistemological teaching as well as its psychology of cognition. The different ways of knowing distinguished in Buddhism and the analysis of the psychological processes involved in the different forms of knowing are extremely important from the point of view of educational psychology.

Buddhism states its position very clearly regarding the degree of reliance that could be placed on different means and sources of knowing. Knowing is explicitly distinguished from believing. Dogmatic clinging to a view with no regard for valid grounds for its truth is discouraged. Buddhism rejects absolute

and ultimate dependence on grounds such as external authority including revelation (*anussava*), faith in human or superhuman sources (*saddha*) and speculative reasoning or pure deductive or a priori reasoning from self-evident premises (*takka*). Buddhism does not deny the usefulness of such means in the attainment of truth. But it argues that absolute and ultimate dependence on them is unwarranted. For one cannot be said to be enlightened or liberated by means of wisdom unless one has directly experienced the truths connected with liberation. It is argued that the content of revelation could turn out to be empty and false when tested in the light of human experience while what is not found in revelation could turn out to be true.[1] On like grounds conclusions reached on the basis of speculative or deductive reasoning from so-called self evident premises are said to lack dependability in an ultimate sense. The Kalama Sutta of the Buddha can be viewed as an ancient charter for free inquiry, for it rejects the dependence on external authority as an ultimate ground for determining what is true and right.[2] In the Kalama Sutta the Buddha points out that in a context where one is confronted with mutually contradictory teachings about the good life, the best policy to adopt is to rely on one's own personal and experiential understanding of what is good and right. It classes dependence on revelation (*anussava*), the authority of tradition (*paramapara*), the authority of sacred scriptures (*pitakasampada*), and the authority of revered teachers (*samano no garu*) in the same category, for all these sources of knowledge involve dependence on some sort of authority. The freedom asserted in this context does not imply either that there could

not be persons who are in a special position to communicate significant knowledge to others who are ignorant, or that moral decisions, or conclusions about what is true and false, could be made according to each one's whim and fancy. Human beings share a world of common experience. This is what makes it possible to make a distinction between truth and falsity, knowledge and delusion. Interpersonally communicable knowledge must ultimately be based on sharable and common experience of mankind and not on individual convictions, preconceived notions, prejudices, authoritative commandments or personal inclinations (*saddha, ruci, ditthinijjhanakkhanti*). Like *anussava* and *takka*, *saddha* (faith or mere personal conviction), *ruci* (personal preference or inclination and *ditthinijjhanakkhanti* (the personal preference of a dogma which one has contemplated upon) cannot be sure guides to the truth of a proposition, for however strong such bases may be they may lead to truths as well as to falsehoods. In other words they cannot be used as crieria of truth. Chanki Sutta M.N.

The dogmatic attitude which prompts a person to rush to conclusions is clearly discouraged in Buddhism. Dependable knowledge involves a rigourous process of formulating a plausible hypothesis and testing it in the light of further evidence until the evidence could, with good reason, be judged to be conclusive. This scientific approach is clearly illustrated in the Buddha's discourse on the 'Simile of the Elephant's Footprint' (Culahatthipadopama Sutta). According to this illustration, if a man who enters a forest inhabited by elephants comes accross a large footprint of an elephant he should not on that ground alone

rush to the conclusion that it is the footprint of a large elephant. For there could be elephants whose footprint is large although the elephants themselves are small in size. Further observations should be made before the hypothesis is fully confirmed. In this instance it is pointed out that ultimately, the direct observation of the elephant itself will fully confirm the original hypothesis leaving no further room for doubt.[8] In this Sutta the Buddha lays down very clearly a significant norm for dependable knowledge, that is testing in the light of one's own direct experience. It is significant that when Arahat Mahinda visited Sri Lanka, this was the discourse selected for his first preaching of the *dhamma* to king Devanampiyatissa.[9] The traditional account of the encounter between Arahat Mahinda and king Devanampiyatissa clearly illustrates that a rational and scientific approach in the pursuit of knowledge including man's ethical knowledge is an intrinsic feature of Buddhism.

Buddhism clearly distinguishes between indoctrination and genuine transmission of knowledge. Indoctrination involves a process of irrational persuasion. It could be achieved by means such as systematic propaganda, an appeal to emotions, or any other means such as luring a person through material advantages, social privileges, threats etc. to accept a certain ideology, a point of view or a way of life. Buddhism is clearly opposed to such irrational conversion to a way of life. The Buddha has consistently insisted that it is one's own understanding and independent comprehension of the nature of reality that assures one the desired moral transformation and liberation. Imposing a

dogma

Dogma by irrational means creates an attitude of mind which leads to intolerance of other views, fanaticism and extremism which are common sources of much dissension and dispute in society. Buddhism recognizes the tendency to cling to a dogma (*ditthivada*) as an innate tendency in all human beings. This is a great hindrance to education in the proper sense of the word. The mind of the person who is liberated through the Buddhist path of moral education is said to be characterized by freedom and detachment from dogmatic views. He or she discards all dogmas. What he or she values is not the view or opinion that is held to be [illegible] peace and freedom of mind that has been attained. He or she does not under any circumstance participate in theological disputes.[4] The Buddha does not advocate hostility [illegible] criticism. He advises his disciples not to respond with [illegible] when others criticize the Buddha, his teaching or the community of monks. He points out that such an emotional reaction is harmful to oneself for it prevents one from examining those criticisms objectively and determining whether they are valid or not.[5]

The Buddha, as a teacher, did not expect those who listened to his teaching to believe it merely on faith. Faith in the sense of confidence in the teacher may be useful as a preliminary requirement, but is by no means sufficient in itself. Even the initial faith in a teacher must be preceded by some rational reflection on the reliability of the teacher. Blind or baseless faith (*amulika-saddha*) is rejected as being a hindrance to the seeker after reliable knowledge. Even the initial faith

must be based on some degree of rational inquiry and reflective understanding (*akaravati saddha*). A person who has initial faith in a teacher is advised not to commit himself to the claim that he possesses knowledge prior to his personal verification of those claims. In the Canki Sutta it is pointed out that if a person has faith, if he is intent on preserving the truth, he is entitled only to make the claim 'Such is my faith' (*evam me saddha hoti*) but not to assert 'This alone is the truth everything else is false' (*idam eva saccam mogham annam*).[6]

A teacher who is believed to be capable of communicating moral knowledge may according to Buddhism be relied on provided he satisfies certain criteria. The moral qualities of the teacher should be carefully observed by observing his or her conduct in numerous situations, in order to test whether he or she is a person whose character is defiled by greed, hatred and delusion.[7] The Buddha as a moral teacher threw open the challenge to his disciples to make use of their own eyes and ears to observe his verbal and bodily actions in numerous contexts and situations in order to test whether the enlightenment claimed by him was genuine or not.[8] The important point made in these instances is that moral knowledge can be communicated only by people who are moral. Therefore those who wish to acquire a moral education need to seek the guidance of those who are capable of imparting such an education. Further, such education is not a matter of merely listening to ethical dogmas, or accepting them on blind faith in the teacher, but a matter of verifying moral truths in the actually lived

experience of one's own personal life. Moral knowledge when effectively imparted must bring about a noticeable change in the lives of those to whom it has been imparted as well as in the patterns of social interaction exhibited by such persons. In the contemporary context however, it might not be practical to expect the kind of moral perfection in a teacher, that the Buddha was speaking in his discourses. But the fact remains that those who undertake the task of imparting a kind of learning that is expected to bring about a moral transformation in those who must themselves be persons who have at least to some degree benefited from what they teach. In other words, they are required themselves, to some extent at least, to have had direct experiential knowledge of the moral truths that they attempt to impart to others.

Buddhist scriptures express distinctions in modes of knowing by varying the prefix attached to the root *jna*, which expresses in general a form of knowing. Accordingly the following variant forms are to be met with frequently in Buddhist scriptural sources:

Prefix	Root	Noun	Verb
sam +	*jna* –	*sanna*	*sanjanati*
vi +	*jna* –	*vinnana*	*vijanati*
abhi+	*jna* –	*abhinna*	*abhijanati*
pari+	*jna* –	*parinna*	*parijanati*
pra +	*jna* –	*panna*	*pajanati*

By the use of a variety of terms Buddhism suggests that cognition takes place at different levels and from different perspectives. The same objective existence may, according to this view, be cognized in a variety of ways. Each different cognitive perspective involves certain specific psychological consequences.[9] Usually the *sanna* and the *vinnana* ways of cognition are associated in Buddhism with the ordinary uncultivated modes of perceiving the world.

The Pali Nikayas explain *sanna* and *vinnana* as stages of cognitive activity associated with ordinary sense experience. The standard description of this process of cognition runs as follows:

> Depending on the eye and material forms there arises visual *vinnana*. By the coming together of these three there arises sense impingement. Depending on sense-impingement arises sensation (*vedana*). That which one senses, one knows in the way of *sanna*. That which one knows in the way of *sanna* is that which one thinks about.[10]

Sanna can briefly be described as the conceptualizing activity of the mind. It is the activity of the mind that provides the raw material for thought (*vitakka*). Those who are incapable of developing the more enlightened cognitive responses to perceptual data get trapped in the conflict generating process triggered off

by *sanna*. As the Sutta from which the preceding quotation was taken continues to describe this process:

> One gets obsessed with that which one thinks about. Due to this (obsession) a person gets assailed by the ideas of conceptual proliferation with regard to the past, present and future material forms which are cognizable by means of visual *vinnana*.[11]

This is the nature of all mundane processes of knowing. The activity of sense knowledge which is carried out in terms of concepts which often are charged with emotive meanings of an unwholesome nature acquire a force which is capable of overwhelming the thinker. It does not bring about a radical transformation of character or conduct but on the contrary has a deleterious effect on the person. The higher ways of knowing referred to in Buddhism involves a trained and educated response to one's sensory environment. In all ordinary cognitive activity, the knowing subject becomes a victim to the very processes of sense cognition because he or she is incapable of responding to the sense stimuli in an enlightened manner. The thought processes dominated by unwholesome emotions, perverted ideas and delusions produce all the conflicts, creating immense suffering for the perceiving subject. The unwholesome patterns of behaviour exhibited by the perceiving subject who becomes a victim to this process are therefore, traced in Buddhism to the lack of wisdom and insight or in other words to ignorance (*avijja*). The ways of knowing signified by terms such as

abhinna, *parinna* and *panna* are different in that they have the effect of transforming human character and conduct. Thus in the Mulapariyava Sutta, the Buddha indicates the difference between the cognitive mode of the uninstructed ordinary person (*assutava puthujjano*) whose cognitive response is confined to the *sanna* way, and that of the instructed noble disciple (*sutava ariyasavako*) who cultivates the cognitive modes referred to as *abhinna* and *parinna*.[12]

The teaching of the Buddha is not based on revelation or traditional authority (*anussava*), or on pure logical and speculative reasoning (*takka, vimamsa*). It is said to be based on the direct personal supercognitive experience (*abhinna*) of the Buddha. The noble truths which the Buddha knew in this manner are believed to be knowable and experientially sharable by others as well by the same means adopted by the Buddha provided they fulfill the requirements of the path. The teaching is verifiable (*ehipassika*): it is to be personally known by the wise ones in the light of each one's own experience (*paccattam veditabbo vinnuhi*). The ultimate liberation of mind is also to be known by means of one's own supercognitive experience (*sayam abhinna sacchikatva upasampajja viharati*). There is a genuine process of education involed here; for it is not a mere matter of obeying the supreme commands of a superior being, but a matter of search and discovery involving the intelligence and effort of the individual. It is not mere brain washing or indoctrination leading to the unquestioning acceptance of a set of dogmas, but the comprehension of certain truths about the nature of oneself

and existence as a whole resulting in a total transformation of attitudes and behaviour.

Abhinna is considered to be a superior mode of knowing because it involves the exercise of certain extraordinary sensory capacities such as clairvoyance (*dibbacakkhu*), telepathy (*paracittavijanana*), clairaudience (*dibbasota*) and retrocognitive memory which retrieves the memories of past existences (*pubbenivasanussati*). The most important *abhinna* is the practical knowledge that has a specifically moral significance, that is the wisdom leading to the destruction of the cankers or defilements (*asavakkhayanana*). *Parinna* stands for the perfected knowledge of the enlightened person involving seeing all phenomena objectively without grasping only the delightful aspect of things. *Parinna* is different from a limited persoective upon things determined by the untrained psychological reactions of attraction and repulsion that delude the mind and lead the perceiving subject astray. *Parinna* involves a comprehensive understanding of the real nature of things (*yathabhutanana*), specially, of those that arouse sensuos passions. *Panna* also stands for the knowledge of things or all the data of human expereince as they really are. It is not just ordinary sense knowledge.

It might be argued that the so-called extra-ordinary supercognitive experiences referred to in Buddhism as *abhinna* are so remote from everyday experience and our contemporary notions of what is scientifically valid that no real significance can be

attached to them. However, it is important to realize the limitations of modern science and be open minded regarding the psychic potential of a human being, and leave open the possibility of developing through mental culture certain extra-ordinary psychic capacities of the human being, the possibility of which was commonly admitted and shared in their personal experience by ancient sages of the East. Modern science may not be in possession of the single paradigm of knowledge. To believe so would be to be unduely dogmatic about the achievements of modern science. It is important to realize that it is one paradigm among many possible paradigms. This appears to be a more reasonable approach to take in the light of some of the findings of parapsychological experiments. Despite their current semi-scientific status, such findings are sufficiently compelling upon the more non-dogmatic minds that they are unwilling to concede that such findings are entirely classifiable as pseudo science.

It is also relevant at this point to mention that the paradigm of knowledge adopted in modern science is closely linked to a materialistic world view and a non-cognitivist approach to values. The result is that scientific knowledge has been completely divorced from a concern with values and a desire for the acquisition of wisdom. This can be seen as the major tragedy in the sphere of education in the contemporary world. Buddhism clearly is a system of thought which distinguishes between knowledge and wisdom and lays due emphasis on the significance of the latter.

...ñña stands for a kind of wisdom. It is not mere ... facts. It involves knowing how to live. It is a ...ing that integrates knowledge of nature with the most de... to live. It may be said that it is this kind of ... theory that is sadly lacking in the theories of ...luenced by the modern scientific thinking of the ...es ... is not mere knowledge but a kind of goal directed know...ge. It is concerned primarily with the nature of the good life ... is relevant not only in the life of the recluse who ...e... reme enlightenment and liberation but also in the life ...ist layman who has not totally renounced the life of ... involving the enjoyment of sense pleasures. The lay ...er... quired to have what the Buddha described as *nissarana* ...sdom that conduces to liberation) even in his ... in the life of sense pleasures. It is wise living ... a person to live in the household free from ...cor... tension and anxiety. The layperson is expected to live in ... household with a mind free from the stain of miserliness (*...lamaccherena cetasa*). The principles of Buddhist ... are extremely important in producing this kind of mental outlook which is an indispensable requirement of a ...ic... free society. Buddhist methods of mental training are ...ed to produce in the individual a kind of awakening into ... knowledge of things as they really come to be (*...anana*) which is to serve as an antidote to intensely ...se... and egoistic modes of behaviour. The objects of the ... well as one's own personality are to be seen with ...yt... and meditative insight as merely dependently arising

processes in which nothing of substance inheres. When such insight is developed regarding our own nature as well as all the data of human experience, a radical change in the manner of our responses to the environment is expected to occur. The motivational roots of human behviour are expected to undergo transformation as a consequence of such wise reflection on the nature of life. Once such a shift in one's cognitive perspective on the nature of reality occurs, as described in Buddhism in such general terms as "whatever has the nature of arising, has the nature of passing away (*yam kinci samudayadhammam sabbam tam nirodhadhammam*) there is a radical transformation of the motivational roots of human behaviour. The dogma of a substantial ego (*sakkayaditthi*) is supposed to be given up at this stage of understanding. This eliminates the tendency to consider the entire world apart from oneself, as one to be grasped, manipulated and utilized to satisfy one's own egocentric wants, desires, lusts and greeds. The initial insight into the three characteristics of all existence, namely, impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and absence of self-nature (*anatta*) convinces a person that egoism should be replaced by compassion towards all suffering beings. It is only then that man can fully relate himself to others. One would then be in a position to see that one is in the same plight as another. The sense of equality and the feeling of oneness with others (*samanattata*) which produces insightful comoassion is a consequence of either totally discarding or radically weakening the deeply ingrained tendency to cling to the self.

Buddhism does not confine itself to the mere dogmatic ssertion of a body of doctrines. What is asserted in the octrines consisted of the verbal formulations of the xperiential content of the Buddha's knowledge. Such knowledge ould be communicated to others who were intent on listening and aving attention to it. The verbal communication of such nowledge was considered as the teaching of the *dhamma*. Persons o listen attentively to the verbally transmitted *dhamma* are pposed to gain, initially, the kind of wisdom which is scribed as *sutamayipanna*. The Pali commentaries describe such owledge as *sotavadhane panna sutamaye nanam*.[14] The second type understanding is said to dawn as a consequence of the tellectual effort of the listener. As explained by the mmentaries: "When the Buddha or a venerated disciple of his o is capable of instructing) expounds the *dhamma*, one listens that *dhamma* and develops confidence in it. The wisdom duced by mental reflection consists of inquiry, application, ghing, close examination, and considering it objectively in 's mind.[15] Here the initial confidence or faith (*saddha*) ned by listening to the teaching is considered merely as a ting point for the learner's own independent search for the h. The teacher's words should not be blindly accepted. The ner should activate his own capacities of understanding and llect to grasp the teaching. He or she should be of an iring and investigating mind. The acquisition of knowledge ugh learning is to be viewed not merely as a process of nwashing or indoctrination but as a rational and reflective vity involving the full intellectual participation of the

learner. The initial wisdom that comes from listening to the utterance of another is *sutamavi panna*. The reflective knowledge is a consequence of the individual's own independent and wise reflection on the verbal learning that he or she has acquired. [19]

It should constantly be kept in mind that the knowledge that Buddhism is primarily interested in is self-transforming or liberating knowledge. Understanding of one's own inner nature, specially the workings of one's mind through introspective observation and analysis is essential for this purpose. A prerequisite for such observation is a high degree of self-discipline and mental composure. This would not be required to the same degree in the knowledge that man is seeking to acquire in scientific and technological fields. However, Buddhism adopts a methodology and an attitude which is not in principle opposed to those who seek scientific and technological knowledge. The same concern with objectivity is an indispensable requirement. Scientific knowledge is primarily in terms of intersubjectively observable material phenomena whereas Buddhist knowledge is primarily in terms of intersubjectively sharable elements of human experience. Scientific technology intends to control the material environment to satisfy human needs and wants. Buddhism attempts a technology of mind culture to change human nature with a view to promoting human happiness in the most ultimate sense leading to a readjustment of the nature of human wants.

N O T E S

1. M 1.520.
2. A 1.189.
3. M 1.175f.
4. The discourses in the Atthakavagga of the Suttanipata repeatedly emphasize the point that a liberated person does not grasp any dogmatic view or engage in ideological disputes.
5. D 1.3.
6. M 2.171.
7. Ibid.173.
8. *Vimamsakena bhikkhave bhikkhuna .... tathagate pi samannesana katabba sammasambuddho va no va vinnanaya.* (By an inquiring monk investigation should be made even into the Tathagata in order to ascertain whether he is a fully enlightened one or not). M 1.317.
9. For a full discussion of the terms referring to cognition in Buddhism see P.D. Premasiri, "Early Buddhist Analysis of Varieties of Cognition" *Sri Lanka Journal of Buddhist Studies* (Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, 1987) pp.51-69.
10. *Cakkhun ca paticca rupe ca uppajjati cakkhuvinnanam. Tinnam sangati phasso. Phassa paccaya vedana. Yam vedeti tam sanjanati. Yam sanjanati tam vitakketi.* (M 1.293)
11. *Yam vitakketi tam papanceti. Yam papanceti tato nidanam*

purisam pañcasannasaṅkha samudacaranti atitanagata paccuppannesu cakkhuvinneyyesu rupesu. (Ibid.)

12. M 1.1f.

13. In the Pali canon three types of wisdom are referred to. They are. (1) *sutamaya panna.* (2) *cintamaya panna* and (3) *bhavanamaya panna.* See D 3.219.

14. Nettippakarana. (P.T.S.) 8.

15. *Yassa satta va dhammam desayati annataro va garutthaniyo sabrahmacari so tam dhammam sutva saddham patilabhati tattha va vimamsa ussahana tulana upaparikkha manasanupekkhana ayam cintamayi panna.* (Ibid.)

16. *Parato ghosa sutamayi panna. Paccattasamutthita yoniso manasikara cintamayi panna.* (Ibid)

is a universal truth few are deeply and continuously aware of this. Buddhism points out that if and when one sees things (*dhamma*) as they are (*yathābhūta*) one would not fail to realise that one is in bondage to saṃsara. Since one's view is normally blurred by ignorance one fails to see the true nature of things and consequently fails to realise that one is in bondage to saṃsāra. As long as one's view is veiled by ignorance one regards the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*), which constitute all physical and mental phenomenon of existence, as one's own ego. and arising out of this ego-consciousness are other derivatives in the form of craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and views (*diṭṭhi*) which further obliterate the true nature of things. Under the influence of these conditions one indulges in an ever-prolific process of conceptualisation with regard to all objects of senses and get entranced with them. Thus, he becomes still more fettered and burdened.

The Buddha emphatically states that just as there is suffering there is also cessation of suffering (*M.* I. p. 140). and this conception of emancipation from suffering (*dukkha pamocanaṃ*), from the bondage (*mokkhanti māra bandhanā, Dhp. v.* 37) and burdens of existence (*vimutto upadhisaṃkhaye, A.* II. p. 24) is the *raison d'etre* of Buddhism.

From the nature of bondages it is clear that emancipation from them depends on the cessation of the process of conceptualisation by the mind. This is possible by eradicating ignorance (*avijjā*), the root-cause of all misconceptions, and by developing intuitive knowledge (*paññā*) which enables one to see things in their true perspective. This has to be achieved by following the Middle Path (*majjhimā-paṭipadā*), also called the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*). To win emancipation from the bondages and burdens of saṃsāra one has to be equipped with three virtues viz., *sīla, samādhi* and *paññā*. As one progresses along the Middle Path one becomes able to perfect one's ethical conduct (*sīla*). practise mental culture (*bhāvanā*) and develop mental concentration (*samādhi*) and sharpen intuitive knowledge (*paññā*). The more one progresses along this path-the more one becomes progressively detached from saṃsāra for, one begins to see the true nature of things. Perfection of ethical conduct helps to develop mental concentration and intuitive knowledge. With the development of mental concentration one could systematically eliminate initial application of thought (*vitakka*) and investigation (*vicāra*) that give rise to a complex process of conceptualisation. With these ethical and mental developments the intuitive knowledge gets sharpened and perfected. enabling one to see that all phenomena of existence are impermanent (*aniccā*), are subject to suffering (*dukkha*) and without a permanent entity (*anattā; M.* I, pp. 4 ff. 235 f.). When convinced of this fact the ego-consciousness gets completely eradicated, and thenceforth one becomes able to regard what is seen just as the seen, what is heard just as the heard, what is sensed just as the sensed and what is cognised just as the cognised, without indulging in any process of conceptualisation with regard to them (*Ud.* p 8). With this non-conceptualising position the mind becomes emancipated of all the inflowing impulses of sensuous gratification (*kāmāsava*), of becoming (*bhavāsava*) of ignorance (*avijjāsava*). Such a one is emancipated of all cankers (*khiṇāsava*). In such a one arises the knowledge that he is emancipated. and such a one comprehends that destroyed is the birth. brought to a close is the holy-life and that there is no more being such and so (*M.* I. p. 438). One so emancipated is described as one who has utterly destroyed all fetters of existence (*parikkhīṇabhava saṃyojana, M.* I. pp. 4, 235).

S. K. Nanayakkara

EMBRYO. See BIRTH. CONCEPTION and GANDHABBA.

EMERALD BUDDHA. According to the Pali text *Ratanabimbavaṃsa* the Emerald Buddha was made by *deva* who afterwards presented the image to one of the arahants named venerable Nāgasena in Pāṭaliputra. Venerable Nāgasena is supposed to have miraculously got seven relics of the Buddha to reside in the statute. The image was in Pāṭliputra and subsequently removed to Ceylon, Cambodia and from this last-named country to Ayudhya, Lopburi, Kampaengpet and Chiengrai respectively in Thailand. In order to conceal the precious statue, the governor of Chiengrai had the statue plastered, lacquered and gilded and then enshrined in a pagoda in that town.

The above story appears to be more or less a legend. Historically speaking, it is known that in 1434 A.C. a gilt image of the Buddha was found enshrined in a pagoda in Chiengrai which had been struck by lightning. Consequently the image was removed to a *vihāra*, but two or three months later the plaster on the nose of the image had flaked off revealing the emerald structure. The plaster covering was taken off and the fame of the image spread widely attracting many worshippers. At that time Chiengrai was under Chiengamai and the king of Chiengmai sent a procession to bring the image to his capital. The elephants carrying the sacred image, of their own accord, headed for Lampang. Here the statue remained for 32 years. King Tiloka who ruled over Chiengmai (1443 1487) succeeded in bringing the Em-

rald Buddha from Lampang to Chiengmai in 1468, and there the image reposed for 84 years. In 1552 Jaijettha, king of Chiengmai, the son of the king of Lānchāṅ and grandosn of the former king of Chiengmai, went back to rule at Luang Prabang (now in Laos), the capital of Lānchāṅ, and brought the Emerald Buddha along with him. The statue on this occasion was kept in this city for 12 years. In 1564 the king of Burma who had become very powerful was having designs of foreign conquest, and king Jaijettha, in order to defend himself against the Burmese king, removed his capital to Vientiane (Laos). The Emerald Buddha was also transferred to the new capital where it was housed for 214 years.

In 1778 a war broke out between Thailand and Lañchāṅ. At that time the capital of Thailand was at Dhonburi. Cao Pya Cakri, (afterwards king Rama I of Bangkok), the general of the King of Dhonburi, went to attack Lāñchāṅ. He captured Vientiane and brought back the Emerald Buddha and another image, Pra Bang, down to Dhonburi. After ascending the throne he founded Bangkok as his capital in 1782, and constructed the temple of the Emerald Buddha in the present precincts, namely the Royal Palace, where he placed the precious image. It has remained there since 1784 in the royal shrine of Pra Keo or Sriratanasasadaram (more commonly called Chapel Royal), attached to the Grand Palace. He designed two seasonal costumes for the image, one for the summer and another for the rainy season. During the reign of King Rama III (1824-1851) a costume for the winter season was added. (See PL. VII).

According to R. Lingat, the French scholar who had made a careful study of the image, the material is not emerald but a kind of green stone found in the Nan region in northern Thailand (as well as in southern China). Probably it is chrysoprase, an apple-green variety of chalcedony. It was Monkut (Rama III), who, so to say, fixed the identity of the stone, for in declaration he held it to be jade and, therefore concluded that it came from China.

The image is held in the greatest veneration as it is regarded as the nation's palladium, much in the way that the Tooth Relic was held by the kings of Sri Lanka. As with the case of the Tooth Relic the Emerald Buddha too is in the personal custody of the king, particularly because it is also the tutalary spirit (so to say) of his own Cakri Dynasty. It is he who takes the leading part in the seasonal changing of the robes of the image.

The image has been fashioned out of a single block measuring 48.3 cm. by 60 cm. and in this about 2 ft. high. On the head is a painted golden crown; into the forehead a diamond has been set serving as the *ūrṇā*, the body is in a meditational posture. A pyramidal throne 10.4 m. high forms the base. Stylistically it is northern Thai, and chronologically it is one of the earliest (if not the very earliest) of Thai images. (PLS. VIII and IX)

On days of religious significance vast crowds of worshippers congregate to pay veneration to their palladium. This veneration is most marked on *uposatha* days when the precincts are opened to general public.

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Subhadradis Diskul

EMOTION. The term *'emotion'* is used in the English language to signify a wide variety of psychological characteristics which are attributed to human beings. It is one of the principal psychological terms of a generic nature. In Buddhist usage there is no generic concept which exactly corresponds to the concept of emotion. Buddhism has adopted its own mode of conceptualizing psychological phenomena giving rise to the difficulty of finding exact equivalents in European languages for the psychological terminology it uses. This is understandable because concept formation is closely associated with forms of life, world views and the cultural setting within which language is used.

Most psychologists believe that motives and emotions are very closely intertwined. The nature of the relation between motivation and emotion as well as the precise definition of emotion itself may be considered as an unresolved issue in psychology. In the opinion of most psychologists, emotion is the term used to describe basic affective processes. Emotions are usually aroused by external stimuli, and emotions so aroused are expressed towards the stimuli in the environment that arouse them. According to Gilbert Ryle, who made a remarkable contribution to the Philosophy of Mind in the Western world, the term 'emotion' is used to designate a number of different kinds of mental activity such as inclinations or motives, moods, agitations and feelings.[1] Although Buddhism lacks a generic term corresponding to the term 'emotion', it deals extensively with the kinds of mental activity designated by that term.

1. *The Concept of Mind* (Penguin Books, 1963) p. 81.

The fundamental problem that Buddhism as a religious and philosophical system deals with is the problem of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) as formulated in the Four Noble Truths presented in the first sermon of the Buddha. According to the Buddha, the problem of *dukkha* is closely connected with a person's level of understanding or cognition and the nature of the motivational and emotional structure of his personality. *Dukkha* is to be eliminated by the replacement of ignorance (*avijjā*) with wisdom (*paññā*) and transforming one's unwholesome motivational and emotional nature by the replacement of unwholesome motives and emotions (*akusalā dhammā*) with wholesome ones (*kusalā dhammā*). *Nibbāna*, the ultimate goal of Buddhism which is conceived as the destruction of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkhakkhaya*) is often defined as the eradication of greed, hatred and delusion (*lobhakkhayo, dosakkhayo, mohakkhayo*). According to the Buddhist analysis of human behaviour, greed (*lohha*) and hatred (*dosa*) resting on delusion (*moha*) are the two main motivational roots of unwholesome human behaviour (*akusala samācāra*). The Buddha teaches that liberation from the predicament of human misery is possible by a transformation at the level of understanding. A transformation at the level of understanding leads to a transformation at the level of motivation and emotion as well, changing the entire pattern of man's behavioural responses and feelings. In the techincal terminology adopted in Buddhism such transformation is described as *paññāvimutti* (liberation through wisdom) and *cetovimutti* (liberation of mind). The latter can be understood as the liberation consisting of a transformation in the emotional stucture of personality. Buddhism attempts to identify and classify numerous mental phenomena which are supposed to be by products of greed and hatred in its deep, penetrative and somewhat exhaustive analysis of the unwholesome emotions that create human misery. The Buddhist analysis is characterised by an intense practical and ethical interest and concern. For its attempt is to distinguish experientially, between the kinds of emotion that are desirable and those that are undesirable for man, and between kinds of emotion that are conducive to his well-being and happiness and those that are not. Such a distinction is made with a view to promoting the cultivation of the wholesome emotions (*kusalānaṃ Dhammānam bhāvanāya*) and the elimination of the unwholesome emotions (*akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pahānāya*). With a practical and ethical end in view, Buddhism presents extremely interesting and significant analyses of man's emotional constitution and despite the fact that they appear within the context of a doctrine of liberation which is generally associated with religious world views, they are of great psychological significance.

Instead of the generic term emotion, Buddhism uses the term *dhamma* to refer to mental phenomena in general, classifying them ethically as *kusala* or *akusala*. There are a number of Buddhist concepts that have an affinity to and connection with the concept of emotion although those concepts cannot be said to be exactly equivalent to what is signified by the term 'emotion'. There is in Buddhism an analysis of the origin of emotions, a detailed enumeration of wholesome as well as unwholesome emotions, a method of training and educating human emotions and an account of the nature and consequences of certain emotions. A significant question that has drawn the attention of contemporary philosophy of mind in the West has been whether emotions should be conceived according to the traditional theory of mind which affirms a dualism of mind and matter or whether such a dualism entirely misconstrues the logical character of our concept of emotion. Although Buddhism has shown no direct concern with such logical issues, there is much that is of philosophical interest implied by the references to emotion in the Buddhist teachings.

In Buddhism the discussion of emotions usually occurs in moral contexts. Specific emotions are discussed under terms having a general psycho-ethical import. Among Buddhist terms that may be said to be related to the concept of emotion the term *āsava* is of special importance. As mentioned above, Buddhism shows an ethical bias in its classification and enumeration of emotions and this is clearly seen in its characterization of *āsava*. The term is translated into English as 'influxes' or 'intoxicants'. It does not, in the Buddhist usage, have a purely descriptive psychological meaning; an evaluative meaning is also built into the term. Therefore, when Buddhism refers to certain emotional traits as *āsava* the term not merely describes a certain psychological or emotional trait but also at the same time implies a certain evaluation. To attain sainthood or the perfection of character which Buddhism calls *arahatta* one has to eradicate the *āsava*. Accordingly the person who has attained perfection is called *khīṇāsavo*. The knowledge that leads to the attainment of liberation in Buddhism is called *āsavakkhayañāṇa*.

The Pali Nikāyas enumerate four *āsava*, namely, *kāmāsava* (those associated with sensuality), *bhavāsava* (those associated with rebecoming) *diṭṭhāsava* (those associated with speculative views or dogmatism) and *avijjāsava* (those associated with ignorance). It is appropriate to consider *āsava* under the Buddhist psychology of emotions as it is clearly indicated that they are mental phenomena which create feelings of anxiety, agitation and vexation (*vighāta parilāha*) to anyone affected by them. In the above enumeration *āsavā* are classified

in terms of their psychological roots of a cognitive and motivational character which give rise to the excitation of certain unwholesome human emotions.

The second concept connected with the Buddhist psychology of emotions is the concept of *anusaya*. The Pali Text Society Dictionary gives the meanings 'bent', 'bias', 'proclivity', 'the persistence of a dormant or latent disposition' and 'tendency' as the principal meanings of this term.[2] Describing people in terms of their psychological tendencies we often refer to them as being 'hateful', 'kindhearted' 'vain', 'lustful', 'conceited' and so on. According to Ryle, these are emotions in the sense that they are "motives by which people's higher level behaviour is explained".[3] However, as in the case of the term *āsava* the Buddhist term *anusaya* also designates certain general dispositional traits of the mind which are exclusively of an unwholesome nature. The *anusaya* are enumerated as those involving (1) attachment or lust (*rāgānusaya*), (2) repulsion or hatred (*paṭighānusaya*), (3) dogmatic views (diṭṭhānusaya), (4) doubt or perplexity (*vicikicchānusaya*), (5) conceit in terms of measuring oneself with such psychological complexes as equality, inferiority and superiority (*manānusaya*), (6) attachment to the round of becoming (*bhavarāgānusaya*) and delusion or ignorance (*avijjānusaya*).[4]

The psychological phenomena designated by the terms *āsava* and *anusaya* seem to overlap. The main difference between the two appears to be that the former emphasizes the arising of these emotional phenomena on the occasion of the excitation of the senses and the latter emphasizes their dispositional nature. *Āsava* are inevitably produced in the activity of sense-perception in an individual who has not become enlightened, while *anusaya* are deep-rooted tendencies or dispositional traits in terms of which people's character and emotional tendencies could be described. Thus *kāmasava* may be produced in a man at the sight of an attractive woman whereas someone may have *rāgānusaya* as a deep-rooted tendency or relatively permanent trait of his character. Thus the term *āsava* denotes the immediacy of the psychological responses to the sensory environment, whereas *anusaya* denotes the dispositional character of those responses. The Buddhist view is that all unenlightened individuals are not free from the afflictions of such *āsava* and *anusaya*. They are the unwholesome aspects of a human being's emotional constitution or nature which need to be transformed or overcome in order to become a worthy or noble person (*ariyapuggala*). As long as a person is subject to their afflictions it is not only the case that he cannot help being miserable, but also he cannot help making others around him miserable by his own unwholesome behaviour. In the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta anusaya* is associated with all manner of conflict that arises at the societal level, such as quarrels, strife, debates, violence, and other moral evils.[5]

A third Buddhist concept which can be said to have some relation to the concept of emotion is the concept of *papañca*. *Papañca* is described in the psychology of Buddhism as a psychological response to the perceptual environment. It can be understood as a combined complex of a cognitive and emotional response to perceptual stimuli consequent upon the nature of the feelings experienced by the perceiver and his evaluation of those feelings with reference to the ego. According to the Pali commentarial tradition *papañca* is threefold as *taṇhāpapañca* (that which is characterised by craving), *diṭṭhipapañca* (that which is characterised by dogmatism) and *mānapapañca* (that which is characterised by conceit). Here too Buddhism deals with the interrelated dual aspects of unwholesome behaviour consisting of the cognitive and emotive constitution of personality. A person who is liberated is said to be free from *papañca*. To be overwhelmed by ideas of *papañca* is said to be the source of many conflicts in society.[6]

Buddhism pays very little attention to an analysis of the lower level or basic physiological motives such as hunger and thirst but focuses its attention intensely on the higher level motives and emotions of a characteristically psychological nature. It concerns itself deeply with such psychological concepts as *taṇhā* (craving), *abhijjhā* (intense greed), *vyāpāda* or *paṭigha* (malice or hatred) because they are related so closely to the Buddhist analysis of the origin of human suffering.

According to Buddhism, no special effort is needed on the part of the individual in order to effect the arising of the above mentioned baser or unwholesome emotions. They arise in a kind of a mechanical or instinctive manner. The baser or unwholesome emotional and motivational traits become strengthened by the constant repetition of patterns of behaviour which accompany their expression. On the one hand a behavioural change at the level of overt expression of a persons emotional nature becomes necessary in order to weaken or eliminate

2. Edited by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (Luzac & Company Ltd., London (1959) p. 44.
3. *The Concept of Mind* p 82.
4. *M.* I, p. 105.
5. *M.* I, p. 110.
6. *M.* I, p. 110.

the unwholesome emotions. On the other hand as long as a person's motivational and emotional constitution is of an unwholesome nature his overt behavioural responses also tend to be unwholesome. Therefore, the predicament of the unenlightened person is one which is viciously circular. He behaves unskillfully because of the unwholesome nature of the emotional constitution of his personality, and those psychological dispositions become further strengthened by repeated unskillful behaviour. This vicious circle can be broken by the person who with great determination and effort treads the noble path consisting of *sīla, samādhi* and *paññā*. The development of *sīla* involves an attempt to transform consciously one's patterns of behaviour: the development of *samādhi* involves an attempt to attain mental composure preventing the excitation of unwholesome emotions creating a disturbed and unsettled state of mind, and the development of *paññā* involves an attempt to cultivate the understanding that cuts off all the unwholesome motives and emotions at their root. Wholesome motives and emotions are to be cultivated with great effort, for one is constantly faced with the danger of being overwhelmed by unwholesome emotions and lapsing into unskillful patterns of behaviour. Buddhism offers practical methods of training and educating human emotions in the form of techniques of mental development called *bhāvanā*. A liberated and enlightened person like the Buddha is referred to as one who has developed what ought to be abandoned (*bhāvetabbaṃ bhāvitaṃ*) and abandoned what ought to be abandoned (*pahātabbaṃ...pahīnaṃ*). This means, among other things that he has abandoned all emotional dispositions of an unwholesome nature and developed those of a wholesome nature.

The origin of all unskilled states (*akusalā dhammā*) is explained in Buddhism in terms of the principle of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). *Avijjā* (ignorance) and *taṇhā* (craving) are very crucial links in the twelve fold formula of Dependent Origination which is meant to explain the genesis of suffering. Ignorance and craving are said to have no known beginning (*pubbākoṭi na paññāyati*). This shows that suffering is a beginningless process resting on the interaction between two crucial conditions one of which is cognitive and the other emotive but both of which are closely interlinked. The problem, as Buddhism sees it, lies in the cognitive and emotive dispositions involved in man's suffering condition. The unskilled cognitive and emotive dispositions persist or disappear together. The solution to suffering consists in transforming one's cognitive and emotive constitution. According to the *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, the problem is that ordinary beings are struck with the *saññā* mode of responding to the perceptual world.[7] It is this cognitive mode which gives rise to the emotive responses of attraction and repulsion. This has to be replaced by the *abhiññā* and *pariññā* modes of cognition which enables a person to respond to all the data of perceptual experience with equanimity.

Buddhism traces all unskilled emotional responses to the basic response of attraction towards pleasant sensory stimuli and repulsion towards unpleasant ones. The psychological process involved is analysed in a number of Suttas of the Pali canon. According to the *Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta*, a person whose sense faculties reach maturity, comes into contact with the external stimuli and becomes attached to those that are pleasant (*piyarūpe rūpe sārajjati*) and shows opposition or repulsion towards those that are unpleasant (*appiyarūpe rūpe byāpajjati*). This way of responding to sensory stimuli amounts to allowing the mechanical flow of unskilled responses unchecked by the exercise of mindfulness (*sati*) and wisdom (*paññā*). It is this process which determines the unwholesome aspect of the emotional life of a person leading to the undesirable consequence of clinging (*upādāna*) and rebecoming which bring in its train all the miseries of existence.[8] As shown in a number of contexts where the Buddha explains the psychological origins of *dukkha* in terms of the principle of *paṭiccasamuppāda* unwholesome emotions are a consequence of a confused response to perceptual experience. A standard formulation of this process in the Pali canon goes as follows:

> Depending on the eye and material form there arises visual consciousness. The coming together of the three is sense contact. Depending on sense contact there arises feeling. One recognizes that which one feels. What one recognizes, one reasons about. One gets obsessed with what one reasons about. As a consequence of this ideas of obsession relating to past, present and future objects of visual experience overwhelm him.[9]

This can be said to be an elaboration of the process which is elsewhere presented more succinctly as "feeling depends on sense contact (*phassa paccayā vedanā*) and craving depends on feeling (*vedanā paccayā taṇhā*). Unskilled emotional reactions are reactions to the agreeable or pleasurable feelings (*sukhā vedaña*) and the disagreeable or unpleasant feelings (*dukkhā vedanā*)

7. In this connection see P. D. Premasiri, "Early Buddhist Analysis of Varieties of Cognition", *Sri Lanka Journal of Buddhist Studies* (Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka) Volume 1, 1987.
8. *M.* I. 266 f.
9. *M.* I. 111 f.

generated in sense perception. The pleasurable feelings induce an attachment to pleasant things (*rāga*), and the unpleasant feelings rouse anger or hatred (*paṭigha*). Emotions which are usually reckoned as unwholesome in Buddhism are different facets of this attraction towards or attachment to (*anurodha*) what is pleasant and withdrawal from or resistance against what is felt to be unpleasant (*virodha*) under the influence of ignorance or delusion (*moha/avijjā*) the main component of which is the dogmatic clinging to a belief in an ego (*attānudiṭṭhi*).[19]

Apart from the principal emotions *rāga* and *dosa* mentioned more frequently than others, Buddhist scriptures enumerate a number of other unwholesome emotions particularly in instances where the need for cleansing the mind of such emotions to attain happiness and tranquillity is emphasized. The *Vatthūpama Sutta* for instance, considers the mind to be similar to a cloth full of stains and dirt (*vattham saṅkiliṭṭham malaggahitam*) when it is subject to certain unwholesome emotions. It is said that happiness or well-being cannot be expected by someone whose mind is subject to such emotions. The unwholesome emotions mentioned in this instance are: *abhijjhāvisamalobha* (intense and uncontrolled greed), *vyāpāda* (malice), *kodha* (anger), *upanāha* (enmity), *makkha* (ill feeling), *palāsa* (spite), *issā* (jealousy), *macchariya* (miserliness), *māyā* (deceit) *sāṭheyya* (treachery), *thambha* (obduracy), *sārambha* (impetuosity), *māna* (pride), *atimāna* (conceit), *mada* (intoxication) and *pamāda* (indolence). There are other emotions which do not fall within this enumeration such as *chanda* (desire or favour), *dosa* (hatred) and *bhaya* (fear) which are classed among the *agatigamana* that hinder a person from acting with a sense of justice and fairness. Some emotions can be interlocked in such a way that one could spring from another. Fear (*bhaya*), and grief (*soka*) for instance, are considered as emotions which are interlocked with other emotions like intense attachment or desire. Thus states of mind like *pema* (love in the sense of personal affections such as the affection to one's dear ones as distinguished from *mettā* which is of a more wholesome and spiritually more superior kind), could give rise to fear and grief. The joy and delight (*pīti, nandi, ratti*) one experiences in relation to sensuous objects could result in deep states of depression when those objects are lost.

Buddhism also mentions certain emotions which could occur in typically moral situations and contexts. *Vippaṭisāra* (remorse) is an unwholesome emotion felt as a consequence of doing what one considers to be wrong. It is an emotion that has to be overcome in order to reach higher levels of mental culture. The perfection of *sīla* (moral practice) is considered to be conducive to the disappearance of remorse. The wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of some emotions depend on the nature of the objects that they are connected with. *Pīti* (joy), for instance, is a wholesome emotion when it is related to certain spiritual attainments but is unwholesome when it is derived from the hankering after material or sensuous things. *Saddhā* (faith) or confidence is a useful emotion when it is properly based, while it could be misleading when it is improperly based. It is counted among the spiritual faculties that the disciples of the Buddha are expected to cultivate. Rightly placed *Saddha* could initiate a process of mental culture leading to gladness (*pāmojja*), joy (*pīti*), relaxation or calmness (*passaddhi*), ease (*sukha*) and finally mental composure (*samādhi*) which is an important stage in the elimination of unwholesome emotions.

Fear, as an emotion is considered to have a healthy effect when it is focussed on the consequences of doing wrong. Thus one may refrain from doing wrong due to the fear of numerous consequences such as the moral disapproval of others, the remorse one may have to suffer as a result of one's own conscience, possible retribution in an afterlife and so on. *Hiri* (a moral sense of shame to do what is immoral) and *ottappa* (a moral sense of fear or shrinking with disgust towards an act of immorality) are reckoned in Buddhism to be foremost among wholesome emotions. These two moral emotions are counted among the noble wealth (*ariya dhana*) that a Buddhist is expected to acquire.

The Buddhist approach to emotions is sometimes misunderstood as an attempt to achieve a state of emotional vacuity. This is evidently a consequence of misinterpreting some stages of mental culture in Buddhism. The attempt in Buddhism is not to dispense with all emotions but to get rid of those that are unwholesome and cultivate those that are wholesome. The disappearance of unwholesome motivational roots like greed (*lobha*) and hatred (*dosa*) leads to the establishment of the wholesome emotions like loving kindness (*mettā*), sympathy (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and an equanimous state of mind characterised by emotional stability (*upekkhā*). These wholesome emotions are called the sublime abidings (*brahma vihāra*) in Buddhism and are strongly recommended for meditative cultivation. *Upekkhā*, as translated in some instances is not indifference or a psychological state of emotional vacuity, but a condition of emotional stability under which other wholesome emotions such as *mettā* could meaningfully co-exist.

10. For an illuminating discussion on this theme see Padmasiri de Silva, *An Introduction to Buddhist Psychology*. (The Macmillan Press Ltd. 1979) p. 424.

... mind and body are completely indepen-
... other (*aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ*) as
... questions (*avyākata*). For its concern
... physical one of a choice between monism
... the practical one of overcoming unsatis-
... (*dukkha*).

... with this practical concern, the Buddha
... mind to be of paramount importance
... activity. The mind is considered to be the
... mental phenomena (*manopubbaṅgamā*
... world is said to be led and directed by
... *nīyati loko*). This is not to be under-
... assertion of metaphysical idealism, but a
... the experimental fact that in the sphere of
... the human mind plays a foremost role.
... environment too is recognized in
... a major factor in determining his psycholo-
... But it insists that the ordinary perceptual
... by the rational or reflective interven-
... produces undesirable consequences. Unwho-
... as shown above are a consequence of
... perceptual process. According to Buddhism
... transform the emotional constitution
... through adjustments in his material
... bound to fail, for in so far as such adjust-
... the participation of human beings, their
... constitution has an important determining
... This shows that the Buddha's teachings
... and emotion have a bearing even on
... transformation.

... aspect of the Buddha's teachings on
... a rejection of reductionist theories of
... attempt to deny the significance of conscious
... and the inner mental life of man. While
... not fall in line with a strict metaphysical
... Cartesian type, it cannot also fall in line
... view of Gilbert Ryle which attempts
... together the importance of the mental
... emotions and to analyse them entirely as
... determined material processes. Gilbert
... dualism of mind and matter calling it
... the ghost in the machine' and takes
... refute the view that emotions are turbulen-
... stream of consciousness to which only the
... stream can have privileged access. He
... is a logical error to conceive of emotions
... occurrences which take place in the public,
... but in people's secret mental worlds.[13]
... Buddhist analysis of emotion takes into

account part of what Ryle has to say about emotions. from the Buddhist point of view Ryle's account of emotions can itself be considered as an oversimplification.

This point may be further elucidated by considering an instance from the Buddhist scriptures where the emotion of anger is discussed. *Mahāniddesa*, a commentarial text which has gained canonical status in the Theravāda tradition due probably to the importance of the canonical suttas included in the *Suttanipata* on which it comments, offers a detailed analysis of the emotion of anger. This analysis has an important bearing on the philosophy of mind. According to this analysis anger is a complex process consisting of both mental and physical elements. The initial stage of the process is conceived primarily as a mental and introspectively observable turbulent or disturbed state of the mind. There is a component of anger which becomes part of the experimential content peculiar to the person who is affected by the emotion. in addition to the overt bodily processes which are open to the observation of any external observer. This component of anger is described in the *Niddesa* as the mental displeasure (*anattamanatā cittassa*) directly and experientially felt at the initial stage of the process itself. Buddhism does not make the mistake of trying to identify a simple entity as what is meant by the term anger. Anger is a complex series of events which proceeds from the mind as its forerunner. The problem with Ryle's account is that he thinks it possible to leave out of account the role of the mind altogether and understand anger purely in terms of the mechanical series of observable physical events. The *Niddesa* says that at times anger-manifests itself only as a disturbance or stirring of the mind (*atthi kañci kālaṃ kodho cittāvilakaraṇamatto hoti*). But it could manifest itself in more violent forms of physical behaviour such as the utterance of abusive words and the acquisition of harmful weapons to inflict injury on one's opponent. When anger develops to its highest intensity it involves even disregard for one's own life, for one would kill one's opponent as well as oneself (*Yato kodho parapuggalaṃ ghātetva attānaṃ ghāteti; ettāvatā kodho paramussādagato paramavepullappatto hoti*).[14]

According to Ryle when we explain actions in terms of motives and emotions it is a mistake to conceive of those motives and emotions as expressing categorical narratives of episodes.[15] According to him reference to motives and emotions should be construed as elliptical expressions of general hypothetical propositions of a certain sort. Ryle argues that emotions cannot be conceived as mental causes of physical events. To say that A Killed B because A was angry does not mean that A's anger was a mental cause of his physical act of killing B. Ryle argues that "to explain an act as done from a certain motive is not analogous to saying that the glass broke because a stone hit it, but to the quite different type of statement that the glass broke, when the stone hit it, because the glass was brittle."[16] Ryle's objective here is to show that emotions have no non-physical status. Being dispositional terms like "brittle" emotions are analyzable into the observable physical processes which are witnessable public events. However, Ryle's analogy cannot be said to do justice to emotion words. The actual manifestation of the brittleness of glass occurs only at the moment something hits it. This cannot be the case with the person who is prone to anger. The glass does not feel the disturbance of its brittleness when it is not being hit by a stone. nor does it harbour brittle thoughts. but the person prone to anger harbours countless angry thoughts even at moments when he has not resorted to any verbal or physical expression of his anger. This is a point that is made clearly in the *Niddesa* analysis. It makes it clear that prior to anger manifesting itself in overt behaviour quite a complex mental activity goes on in the conscious stream of the angry person. To ignore this crucial stage of anger is to leave out what is of utmost importance in the investigation of mental phenomena. Besides the theoretical error involved in the kind of reductionist approach that Ryle proposes, it also can have many undesirable practical consequences.

It needs to be emphasized that unlike theories of mind which attempt to offer reductionist and mechanistic accounts of the nature of mental activity, Buddhism pays a great deal of attention to the reflectively or introspectively observable flow of conscious experience in its treatment of psychological phenomena. From a practical point of view Buddhism considers man's ability to cultivate awareness of what goes on in his stream of conscious as a very important step in redirecting a person's emotions and attitudes. Very often people are not mindful of the arising of emotional experience. Part of the meditative training in Buddhism involves the development of mindfulness with regard to all mental as well as physical processes connected. with the activity of a person's psychophysical organism. Mindfulness helps to detect the arising of unwholesome emotions such as lust and anger at the initial point of their mental origin. Unwholesome emotions are com-

14. *Nd.* I. p. 215 f.
15. *The Concept of Mind*. p. 83.
16. Ibid. p. 84.

parable to springs that have their source in the depths of the human mind. Their outflow can be prevented by exercising mindfulness (*yāni sotāni lokasmim, sati tesaṃ nivāraṇaṃ*). Insight meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*) in Buddhism is a method of observing the way in which emotions arise, stay and pass away at the level of conscious experience. Such watchfullness over the process of unwholesome emotions has the effect of preventing them from passing beyond the confines of the mind and manifesting themselves in overt behaviour. The path of liberation in Buddhism consisting of *sīla, samādhi and paññā* can be seen as one designed to deal with the manifestation of unwholesome emotions at different levels of human activity. *Paññā* destroys the cognitive basis on which unwholesome emotions spring and as a consequence unwholesome emotions are destroyed at the dispositional level itself. *Samādhi* prevents the excitation or the initial stirring of unwholesome emotions *Sīla* prevents the overt expression of unwholesome emotions in terms of verbal and physical behaviour.

The Buddhist treatment of emotion is selective and not exhaustive. For its concern with emotion is governed by an ethical and practical end in view. Buddhism does not pay attention to all the variety of motivational and emotional facets of life but deals selectively with those facets which are related to human happiness and suffering. But it can be said that even within the confines of this limited concern Buddhism has made a very significant contribution to psychology and the philosophy of mind.

P. D. Premasiri

EMPIRICISM. In modern Western philosophy, the term *empiricism* is generally used to designate philosophical schools that rely upon sensory experience as the primary source of human knowledge, and is often contrasted with *rationalism* which highlights the role of reason. However, because the term empiricism is derived from the Latin word *empiricus*, meaning "the experienced," there is also the tendency to extend the scope of empiricism by including under the category of experience those that are neither sensory nor founded upon the sensory; that is, experience that totally transcends sensory experiences. Sometimes, this latter is referred to as intuition, and is more popular with the spiritualist rather than with critical philosophers. Yet even among philosophers who call themselves empiricists, and who consider sensory experience as the primary source of knowledge, there is no concensus as to the nature of sense experience itself. Thus we have at least three versions of empiricism. The first is represented by the three British empiricists, John Locke, George Berkeley and David Hume. With minor variations, they all recognized the immediate impression as the real component in sense experience. Among them, the one who influenced the development of empiricism in the modern world is Hume. Hume assumed that the immediate sense impression as the primary source of knowledge is undiluted by either memories or by any ideas, the latter being merely vague copies of the immediate impressions. This was an essenatialist search for a pure percept, and it contributed toward the conception of a reality where relations are confined to ideas rather than to impressions. This led to extreme skepticism regarding ordinary human knowledge and understanding. The subsequent development known as logical empiricism is a combination of Lockean and Humean ideas. As may be pointed out later, logical empiricism came to a dead-end as a result of its attempt to formulate absolutely valid, logically consistent universal laws of nature to be confirmed by experience. There is yet another version of empiricism less popular among philosophers because it involves a thoroughgoing analysis of the psychology of experience rather than a pure philosophical analysis. It recognizes the complex psycho-physical mechanism involved in sensory experience and, without attempting to weed out psychological factors, provides a more holistic description of experience. According to the conception of reality generated by this form of empiricism, the events as well as their relations are part and parcel of human experience. However, it refrains from interpreting these relations as instances of absolutely incorruptible laws. To distinguish this from the previous version it is called *radical empiricism*, and its strongest advocate in the modern world was the American pragmatist, Willam James.

Thus, allowing for the most generous definition of empiricism, we are left with four versions:

(1) the transcendentalist version that takes veridical experience to be beyond all sensory awareness,

(2) the essentialist version that restricts experience to the immediate sense impressions,

(3) logical empiricism, with its emphasis on logically consistent theories seeking conformation from experience, and

(4) radical empiricism which admits both perceptual and conceptual elements as inalienable parts of experience.

Recent studies in Buddhist thought has provided sufficient evidence to indicate that the philosophical standpoint adopted by its founder, Siddhārtha Gautama,

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was a form of empiricism.[1] Yet it cannot be denied that Buddhism, during the last two and half millenia, did not remain one single philosophical system. It is as complex and veriegated as any other philosophical tradition, Eastern or Western. Since its formulation by the Buddha in the sixth century B.C. a variety of philosophical standpoints comparable to those that are available in the Western world have been advocated by philosophers all of whom claimed themselves to be faithful followers of the Buddha. Thus, in the vast canonical and non-canonical literature belonging to the so-called Theravāda and Mahāyāna, one can perceive a rich variety of philosophical standpoints that renders the search for homogeniety meaningless. At the same time, Buddhism cannot be satisfactorily explained as a gradual growth and development from rudimentary beginnings to sophisticated systems. On the contrary, there is clear evidence that the system formulated by the Buddha was complete in itself, and that the subsequent philosophers were either deviating from it or attempting to resurrect it. What is most interesting is that the Buddha himself started with a radical empiricist approach, and was followed by the main line of thinkers like Moggaliputtatissa, Nāgārjuna, Vasubandhu and Dignāga, all of whom remained faithful to the Buddha, while schools like the Sautrāntikas followed the essentialist version of empiricism and text like the *Lankāvatāra Sutra* retained the transcendentalist empirical stance.

Emerging as a revolutionary against the absolutist, substantialist and essentialist thinking prevalent in India during the sixth century B.C., the Buddha resorted to a detailed psychological analysis of human knowledge and understanding, the first of its kind in history, in order to demonstrate the futility of any search for absolutes, substances or essences. That psychological enterprise also led him to renounce two other pursuits which have been rather popular with most philosophers, namely, the search for absolute certainty with regard to human knowledge as well as for knowledge totally free from error. Realizing that these latter tendencies are corollaries of a utopian epistemology, namely, knowledge of things "as they are," the Buddha focussed upon the knowledge of things "as they have come to be" (*yathābhūta*).[2] For him, this represented the highest knowledge, a form of knowledge that led him to the realization of the four Noble Truths (*ariya sacca*).[3]

To know things as they have come to be is to perceive them in relation to the observable causes and conditions. Such perception would naturally involve consciousness or awareness not merely of the immdeiate sensory impression(s) but also of the background. It is the knowledge of this background that is accounted by for the "stream of consciousness" (*viññāṇasota*).[4] Without such a stream of consciousness, mindfulness (*sati*) or reflective awareness (*anupassanā*) is not possible. Indeed, the latter represents the "royal road" to enlightenment and freedom.[5] This is the foundation of his radical empiricism.

The general response to the above form of radical empiricism from a realist or one who is committed to objectivism is that this is another version of idealism. But the defenders of radical empiricism, the Buddha as well as William James, did not allow room for such criticism. The dichotomous or polar philosophical standpoints such as materialism and idealism, or realism and idealism are the inevitable consequences of a philosophy of language adopted by the essentialist empiricists, for whom each abstract idea with a name to it makes a distinct species.[6] Thus, mind and matter, mental and physical constitute distinct nominal essences. Unfortunately, this empiricist philosophy is not much different from the rationalism of Descartes which it was supposed to dethrone. The sharp dichotomies like mind and matter which, for the rationalist, constituted substances, are now being replaced by nominal essences. The rationalist problem in the sphere of metaphysics now becomes the empiricist problem in the area of linguistic philosophy. The prevalence of such extreme schools of thought like materialism, physicalism as well as behaviorism in the modern world is now being attributed to this philosophy of language logic (see below).

The Buddha's radical non-substantialism (*anattavāda*) as well as the "middle path" (*majjhimā-paṭipadā*) he adopted in the explanation of human experience and conception prevented him from conceiving of sharp dichotomies or bi-polar opposites. For him there was no mind-body problem because he did not define mind as non-material or matter as non-mental. That definition was to appear in the Buddhist tradition with the emergence of realist metaphysicians like the Sarvāstivādins or the essentialist empiricists like the Sautrāntikas.

1. See K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1963, which represents the first detailed treatment of the subject. See also David J. Kalupahana, *Causality, The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1975, and *Nāgārjuna, The Philosophy of the Middle Way*, Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1986.
2. *S.* II. p. 17; V. pp. 422–423. etc.
3. Ibid., V. pp. 422–423.
4. *D.* III. p. 105.
5. *D.* II. p. 290 ff.; *M.* I. p. 55 ff.
6. See John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690, book III, chapter vi, section 38.

A more substantial document is an inscription discovered at Rājabūri, recording the installation of a Buddha statue by an ascetic named Samiddhigupta. This inscription is assigned to the 6th or the 7th century. The script employed is a proto-Thai script.

An inscription that throws very valuable light on the religious intercourse between South India and Thailand is a short epigraph appearing on the socle of a standing Buddha statue found at the Mahadhatvārāma in Lopburi. What is most interesting in this record is the statement that the statue was caused to be set up by a person named Nāyaka Arjava, the *adhipathi* (lord) of Janjaur (Tanjore in South India.) This inscription has been assigned to the eighth century A.C.

Siamese inscription of exceptional interest is the Noen Sa Bua Inscription of Dong Si Maha found at Prachinburi, about fifty miles north east of Bangkok. The inscription is engraved on a slab of stone in a script quite similar to the Pallava script of South India, and had been set up in A.C. 761. The inscription consists of twenty-seven lines, which incorporate three quatrains from a Pali poem called *Telakaṭāhagāthā* composed by a Sri Lankan author. Though this work has been assigned to the eleventh century the instant inscription proves that it had been composed some time before A.C. 761. The sections of the inscription which do not form apart of the *Telakaṭāhagāthā* are written in the Mon script.

An inscription assigned to the year A.C. 1377 records the establishment of a sect known as the *Simhala-Saṅgha* the Sri Lanka Order of monks, in Siam by a delegation of monks who had visited Sri Lanka. This inscription had been set up by the Burmese King Ramkhahaeng who had conquered Siam earlier. Several other inscriptions were set up during the fourteenth century, reflecting the devotion and religious fervour of the Thai people who were now followers of the Theravāda school of Buddhism.

Viet-Nam: Though it has been suggested on the evidence of the Vo-Canh Inscription of King Sri Māra of the second or the third century A.C. that Buddhism had been known in Viet-nam, known in ancient time as Champā, the clearest evidence of the presence of Buddhism in this country is an inscription assigned to the second quarter of the ninth century, set up by a Buddhist of a place called Paṇḍuraṅga, Samantha by name to record the dedication of two shrines and two monasteries to Jina and Siva. The name Jina in this inscription refers to the Buddha, Buddhism being at this stage closely associated with Buddhism. The *praśasti* recording the dedication has been significantly, written by the donor's son Sthavira Buddha-Nirvāṇa. Buddhism in its Mahāyāna form most probably, prevailed in Viet-nam till about the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Assigned to this period is the Kim Choua Inscription of King Jaya Parameśvaravarman, its main interest being a list of Buddhist divinities held in great reverence by Vietnamese Buddhists at the time, such as Sri Jina Lokeśvara, Sri Saugatadeveśvara.

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EPISTEMOLOGY

1. Introduction Epistemology or theory of knowledge is that branch of philosophy which inquires into the nature and scope of knowledge. It attempts to analyze the concept of knowledge with a view to determining the criteria applicable for making the distinction between valid and invalid claims to knowledge. It examines the variety of alleged means and sources of knowledge and lays down the conditions under which claims to knowledge could be accepted to be reliable. In the history of the Buddhist philosophical tradition considerable attention has been paid to epistemological issues. The teachings of early Buddhism have shown an interest in philosophy as a way of life, and this is reflected among other things, in the discussions concerning epistemological questions as well. The primary concern of Buddhism was the attainment of emancipating knowledge. The discussion of epistemological questions occurs

in so far as it is related to the attainment of the ultimate goal of Buddhism. This approach is more marked in the early Buddhist teachings than in the later ones where in certain instances questions of logic and epistemology seem to be discussed for their own sake. The way of life advocated in Buddhism is based on its theory of reality, and its theory of reality has an epistemological foundation. Although the Buddha himself was not concerned with raising philosophical problems about the nature and scope of knowledge purely in the form of an academic pursuit and an exercise in logical analysis, to the extent that the way of life recommended in Buddhism was claimed to depend on statements about the nature of man and the universe which were believed to be true, it became necessary to specify how the alleged truths of Buddhism were to be known.

At the time Buddhism emerged in India as a distinct world view, a plurality of mutually contradictory theories about the nature of man and the universe were advocated by other schools of religious and philosophical thought. Indian thinkers had already developed a considerably high level of critical and analytical inquiry and if the message of the Buddha was to win the acceptance of the intelligent truth seekers of that time it was necessary to state clearly the epistemological foundations of the Buddhist world view. In presenting an alternative world view as well as a goal of ultimate happiness and liberation in terms of it, the Buddha criticized not only some of the existing theories about the nature of reality, but also the epistemological foundations on which these theories were claimed to be based. Buddhism also claimed that the teachings of the Buddha were meant for the intelligent or the wise and not for the stupid or the unwise. The Buddhist scheme of emancipation consisting of three stages has the cultivation of wisdom (*paññā*) as the final stage. In referring to the knowledge of the Buddhist saint, the Pali canonical sources appear to use a special set of cognitive terms to mark the distinction between such knoweledge and other modes of cognitive activity. Paññā (Sanskrit-*prajñā*) is one such term which occurs very frequently in the Buddhist literature of all periods. Buddhism also uses various qualifying prefixes and adjectives with the verbal root *ñā* 'to know' leading to derivations such as *āsavakkhayañāṇa vimuttiñāṇa, abhiññā, pariññā, sammappaññā*, etc. to signify the specific knowledge that Buddhism considers to be directed to the attainment of the goal of emancipation. According to the Buddhist teaching human bondage and suffering are a consequence of ignorance (*avijjā*). The enlightenment (q.v.) of the Buddha is believed to have consisted in the dawning of knowledge and vision into certain realities of life (*cakkhuṃ udapādi ñāṇaṃ udapādi*) expressed in the form of the Four Noble Truths (q.v.). Buddhism contrasted subjective conviction about the truth of any assertion with direct personal knowledge and understanding. A fundamental question of epistemological importance that can be raised in connection with the Buddhist position is how the alleged knowledge of truth and reality in Buddhism is to be characterized. Is it a special kind of religious knowledge describable as a kind of mystic intution? what role does ordinary sense knowledge or empirical knowledge play in the ultimate understanding claimed by the Buddhist saint? Does Buddhism reject the validity of ordinary sense experience and recommend other sources of knowledge such as revelation or intellectual intuition as the means of discovering truth? Answers to such questions as these could be obtained by a careful study of the Buddhist doctrines that were formulated in the different periods of the historical development of the Buddhist tradition.

More attention will be paid in the sequel to the ideas contained in the literature preserved in the Pali Nikāyas on the assumption that it contains the teachings of Buddhism which are closest to those expressed by the Buddha himself. It is reasonable to assume that the Pali Nikāyas as well as the Chinese Āgamas agree in content and go back to a common source. The fact that the Pali Nikāya literature was preserved by the Theravāda school of Buddhism need not lead to the prejudice that the Buddhist teachings contained in this corpus of literature presents a partisan point of view about the original teachings of the Buddha.

2. The pre-Buddhist Background

Examining the pre-Buddhist background of Indian thought K. N. Jayatilleke shows that thinkers of the period belonged to three principal classes according to the epistemological ground accepted by them for their truth claims.[1] The first class of thinkers may be called traditionalists or those who depended on authority of some kind. There were some who derived their knowledge wholly on the basis of a sacred scriptural tradition. The foremost among this class of thinkers were the Brahmins who believed in the sacred authority of the *Vedas*. To the second class belonged those thinkers who may be called rationalists. They propounded their theories on the basis of reasoning and speculation. They can be identified with some of the metaphysicians of the early Upaniṣadic period and other independent thinkers who denied the reliability of the orthodox Vedic tradition such as the materialists and the sceptics. Thirdly, there were thinkers who claimed a direct

1. For a detailed discussion of the Pre-Buddhist background see *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (*EBTK*), K. N. Jayatilleke. (Allen and Unwin, London. 1963) Chapters 1–3.

personal knowledge of the truths they propounded. The Indian materialists who accepted perception alone as a valid means of knowledge belonged to this class of thinkers. What is more interesting is that there were others who based their claims to knowledge not on ordinary sense perception, but on some kind of super-cognitive ability acquired through the practice of mental culture. It is to be noted that in the Middle and late *Upaniṣads* there was a belief in the super-cognitive powers of the meditative person or the Yogi. Verbal forms from *dṛś-* to see were used in these *Upaniṣads* to signify a kind of seeing which did not make use of the eye but a kind of direct intuitive apprehension. This kind of knowledge was claimed specially when referring to the knowledge of the transcendental truth of the reality of *Ātman*. It was claimed that subtle seers by their subtle and superior intuition see the transcendental reality (*dṛśyate tvagryā buddhyā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ, Katha Upaniṣad* 1.3.12). Such knowledge was referred to in the *Upaniṣads* as *jñāna*. The *Ātman* is said to be obtained by right knowledge (*samyag-jñāna*). In addition to Upaniṣdic seers who claimed such knowledge there were other teachers outside the Vedic fold who claimed knowledge of a superhuman kind including omniscience.

K. N. Jayatilleke's discussion of the Pre-Buddhist background in terms of the above classification was most probably influenced by the kind of classification which the Buddha himself is reported to have made in answer to a question raised by a Brahmin named Saṅgārava regarding the nature of the knowledge that the Buddha claimed (*M.* II. p. 211). The Buddha mentions in this context a class of teachers whom he described as *anussavikā*. K. N. Jayatilleke translates the term *anussavikā* in its broad sense as traditionalists. These thinkers are identified by the Buddha himself as the Brahmins who were versed in the three *Vedas* (*brāhmaṇā tevijjā*). The second class of teachers are referred to by the Buddha as *takkī vīmaṃsī*, rendered into English by K. N. Jayatilleke as reasoners and metaphysicians respectively[2] The Buddha identifies himself with the class of teachers who base their teachings about the good life on what they have understood by some super-cognitive means without dependence on hearing from traditional sources (*pubbesu ananussutesu dhammesu sāmaṃ yeva abhiññāya*). It appears that this third class of thinkers referred to by the Buddha were none other than those who claimed super-cognitive powers through meditative culture of the mind or *yoga*. The Pali Nikāyas throw much light on the Buddhist evaluation of the three approaches to truth and knowledge accepted by the teachers belonging to the three groups mentioned above.

3. The Buddhist Attitude Towards Authority

There are several instance in the Pali Nikāyas where the Buddhist criticism of the teachers described as *anussavikā* occurs. One such instance occurs in the context of a moral discussion. Here, the Buddha insists on the importance of being guided, in a moral situation, by one's own personal knowledge and understanding. He speaks of *anussava* as the first of ten grounds on which one should not base one's moral behaviour. What is implied by this discussion is that there is a distinction between the ten ways of claiming knowledge headed by *anussava* and what the Buddha refers to in this instance as 'know by yourself' (*attanāva jāneyyātha*). Six ways of claiming knowledge mentioned in the *Kālāma Sutta* including *anussava* could be considered under the general heading of authority. Authority was accepted as a *pramāṇa* (an epistemological ground) in some non-Buddhist Indian philosophical schools of the post-Buddhist period under the concept of *śabda* (ibid. p. 172f). According to the *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā śabda* denotes the authority of the *Vedas* alone. This reflects the attitude of the ritualistic Brahmins against which the early Buddhist criticism was primarily directed. The *Mīmāṃsā* school upheld the absolute authority of the *Vedas*. The Nyāya school treated the scriptural statements of the *Vedas* as a subclass of verbal testimony while the Vaiśeṣika school treated them as a subclass of inferential propositions. According to the Naiyāyikas the *Vedas* are reliable either because God (*īśvara*) who revealed it is trustworthy, or because the seers who are its authors are trustworthy. The Mimāmsakas on the other hand denied any personal authorship to the *Vedas* and claimed that the *Vedas* are eternal. The importance of *śabda* as a means of knowledge in the post-Buddhist philosophical tradition shows that claims to knowledge on the basis of authority took many different forms. This is also indicated in the *Kālāma Sutta* where six different forms of dependence on authority are mentioned in the following order: (1) *anussavena*, (2) *paramparāya*, (3) *itikirāya*, (4) *piṭakasampadāya*, (5) *bhabbarūpatāya* and (6) *samaṇo no garu*.

Anussava appears to have been used specially to denote the authority of the Vedic scriptures as *śabda* was used in the post-Buddhist Mimāṃsā tradition. The *Caṅki Sutta* refers to a discussion of the Buddha with a Brahmin youth well versed in the Vedic scriptures. The Brahmin youth wishes to know the Buddha's opinion on the attitude of the Brahmins who came absolutely to the conclusion (*ekaṃsena niṭṭhaṃ gacchanti*) that only what is contained in the *Vedas* is true and everything else is false (*idaṃ eva saccaṃ moghaṃ aññaṃ*). In response to the Buddha's criticism that the Brahmin attitude

2. *EBTK*, see p. 171 for K. N. Jayatilleke's translation of the *Saṅgārava Sutta* passage.

amounts to one of blindly following a tradition the truth of which has not been personally tested at any point, the Brahmin youth retorts that it is not merely on faith that the Brahmins claim the validity of the *Vedas* but also on the basis of *anussava*. This suggests that for the Brahmins of this period Vedic scripture represented a sacred, holy or revelational tradition. During the time of Early Buddhism *anussava* had come to mean the sacred Vedic tradition. When referring to this tradition the Pali suttas use words which suggest that it had already become a sacred tradition which was systematized, ceremonially chanted, and authoritatively handed down by a successive line of teachers (*gītaṃ pavuttaṃ samihitaṃ tad anugāyanti tad anubhāsanti bhāsitaṃ anubhāsanti, vācitaṃ anuvācenti: D.* I, p. 241; *M.* II, p. 169). The *Vedas* were often believed to have had a divine origin. The creation of the *Vedas* is attributed to Prajāpati or Brahmā.

K. N. Jayatilleke has identified three possible senses in which the term *anussava* has been used in the religious literature of the time. First, as used of the Vedic tradition the word could mean 'divine revelation', 'systematically handed down. Secondly it could have meant 'authoritative tradition', the source of its authority being the Vedic or any other tradition. Thirdly, it could have meant a 'report' come from mouth to mouth(*EBTK*. p. 182).

There are several suttas in the Pali canon which state the Buddha's reasons for rejecting *anussava* as a reliable means of knowledge. In the *Tevijja Sutta* the Brahmanical claim that the *Vedas* have a divine origin is criticized on the ground that not even the original composers of the Vedic scriptures have had direct personal knowledge of Brahma by seeing Brahma face to face (*D.* I, p. 238). The originators of the Vedic tradition themselves were not in a position to claim 'We know this, we see this' (*mayam etaṃ jānāma, mayam etaṃ passāma*) with regard to the existence of Brahmā. In the *Caṅkī Sutta* the Buddha's criticism is at a different level. Here the Buddha rejects the absolute validity of Vedic scripture on the ground that none of those who handed down the tradition could claim direct personal knowledge of its truth. They are compared to a string of blind men (*andhaveṇuparamparā*). Yet another criticism which the Buddha found to be commonly applicable to *anussava* as well as four other grounds on which one may believe in the truth of a statement (*saddhā* = faith, *ruci* = personal like or inclination, *ākāraparivittaka* = superficial reflection and *diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti* = approval of a theory upon speculative reflection or thinking) is that these grounds alone do not guarantee the truth of the relevant statements. The content of a revelation may be held in very high esteem for having been faithfully preserved (*svānussutaṃ*), but it may be empty, hollow and false (*rittaṃ tucchaṃ musā*), while something else which is not the content of such revelation may be factual and true (*bhūtaṃ taccham anaññathā*). The Buddha points out that the only claim that one can legitimately make with regard to what one has acuired from *anussava* is 'such is what I have acquired from *anussava*' but he is not entitled to make an absolute and exclusive claim to its truth. It is a person who does not make such an illegitimate claim that can be called one who preserves the truth (*saccaṃ anurakkhati*).[3] What is implicit in this criticism of the Buddha is that none of the above grounds logically imply the truth of the statements based on them. If one claims to have heard something from some source or to be firmly convinced of the truth of something, it does not logically follow that what he has heard or what he is firmly convinced of is true. On the other hand if one claims to know something, and if he actually knows it, it must be true.

In the *Sandaka Sutta* Ānanda mentions the distinction that the Buddha is said to have made between two classes of thinkers who gave instruction on a way of life to be followed by others. According to the Buddha, as reported by Ānanda in this sutta, the world view affirmed by one class of thinkers cannot be accepted as one which implies a noble way of life. They are therefore described as *abrahmacariyavāsa*. The world views condemned by the Buddha as *abrahmacariyavāsa* were the materialist world view which denied individual survival after death, and those world views which denied moral values, moral responsibility and free will. Another group of teachers is referred to as those whose world view implied an unsatisfactory doctrine about the noble life (*anassāsikaṃ brahmacariyaṃ*). Those who hold to the truth of *anussava* are said to belong to this group.[4] The Buddhist criticism here of *anussava* is that such an authoritative tradition may or may not suffer from lapses of memory on the part of those who are responsible for handing it down, Moreover, even if it is properly handed down without lapses of memory it may be true or false (*anussavikassa kho pana ... satthuno anussavasaccassa sussatampi hoti dussatampi hoti, tathāpi hoti aññathāpi hoti; M.* I, p. 520).

3. *Anussavo ce pi ... purisassa hoti evam me anussavoti vadaṃ saccaṃ anurakkhati na tveva tāva ekaṃsena niṭṭhaṃ gacchati idam eva saccam mogham aññanti. M* II. pp. 170–171.

4. *... idhekacco satthā anussavoko hoti anussavasacco so anussavena itihitiha paramparāya dhammam deseti M.* I, p. 520.

The Buddha did not reject the Vedic teaching outright, but considered it to be propounding an unsatisfactory teaching about the noble life because it was based on *anussava*. The materialist criticism of the Vedic tradition was much stronger when compared with that of Buddhism. The materialists condemned the authors of the *Vedas* as ignorant and vicious.[5] The Buddhists were much more moderate in their criticism of the *Vedas*. Buddhism recognized that the Vedic teaching contained factual and moral truths opposed to a purely nihilistic world view. The Brahmin teachers were criticized on epistemological grounds for not having personally verified the truth of their beliefs.

Paramparā and *piṭakasampadā* also denote forms of triditional authority. These terms are also used in close association with the Vedic tradition (*brāhmanānaṃ purāṇaṃ mantapadaṃ itihitiha paramparāya piṭakasampadāya; M.* II, p. 169). *Paramparā* may have stood for the unbroken succession of a teaching belonging to the Vedic tradition or outside it. *Piṭakasampadā* also may have stood for an authoritative scriptural tradition in general. *Itikirā* which also occurs in the *Kālāma Sutta* as a separate ground is probably connected with *itihitiha* which has already been mentioned in connection with the other terms denoting revelation and authority. Both *kira* and *ha* are particles which generally occur in the introduction of anecdotal material. The Buddha's teaching is often said to be *anītiha* (*Thag. v.* 331; *A* II, p. 26), which meant that it was not based on hearsay or tradition. Consideration of the contexts in which the term *itikira* occurs in the Pali canon and other occurrences of terms related to it in other Indian literary works shows that the translation of *itikira* as hearsay is reasonable.

The other two forms of authority rejected in the *Kālāma Sutta* are denoted by the terms *bhabbarūpatā* and *samaṇo no garu*. According to the commentarial explanation of *bhabbarūpatā*, it stands for the acceptance of someone's words considering him to be a competent person (*ayam bhikkhu bhabbarūpo, imassa kathaṃ gahetuṃ yuttaṃ, AA.* II, p. 305). The other ground of acceptance, *samaṇo no garu*, which may be translated as 'our prestigious teacher' is similar to the former. Both forms of authority can be considered under verbal testimony, which as a matter of fact came to be recognized as a means of knowledge in the late Indian philosophical tradition under *āptopadēśa* or *āptavacana*. The criticism levelled against *anussava* applies to all other forms of authority as well although it is not explicitly stated with reference to them.

In determining the early Buddhist attitude towards authority (q. v) it is important to see the extent to which Buddhism depended on the orthodox teachings of the pre-Buddhist Vedic tradition in the formulation of its own doctrines. It has often been suggested that the Buddha uncritically accepted some of the dogmas of Brahmanism (EBTK, p. 369 f) E.J. Thomas, for instance, says that Buddhism took for granted some of the pre-Buddhist Indian beliefs like the belief in transmigration and the doctrine of the retribution of action. However, an examination of the pre-Buddhist background shows that these doctrines were neither fully developed nor universally accepted at the time of the emergence of Buddhism. There is no evidence that the Buddha admitted them on the authority of the previous tradition (ibid.p. 372 f)

A question that may be raised with regard to the Buddha's attitude towards authority is whether he expected from his disciples with respect to his own teachings the same critical attitude that he recommended towards external traditions. Some scholars suggest that revelation and faith are as much central to Buddhism as to other religious traditions of a theistic character. The belief that the Buddha was an omniscient teacher (*sabbaññu*) is said to leave no room for critical inquiry. In the evaluation of the place of *saddhā*, a term which is translated as 'faith', it has been suggested that Buddhism also involved a faith in revealed truths (ibid p. 383 f). K. N. Jayatilleke shows that omniscience was attributed to the Buddha in a much later stratum of the Pali canonical scriptures. In the earlier stratum of the canonical literature the Buddha not only denied that he was omniscient in the sense omniscience was claimed by some of his contemporaries, but also affirmed that he possessed only a threefold knowledge (*tevijjā*) which was also shared by a large number of his disciples as well (ibid. pp. 317-381).

It is also clear that in the early sections of the Pali canon *saddhā* in the sense of trust, confidence or faith is contrasted with knowledge (*ñāṇa*). It is also treated as an emotion insufficient for salvation. Buddhism values knowledge above faith. However, as a preliminary stage in the spiritual progress of a disciple faith is believed to play an important role. Sometimes *pasāda* is used as a synonym of *saddhā*. The Pali suttas often use the expression *a aveccappasāda*, which means 'faith consequent upon inquiry'. Buddhism speaks of some forms of faith of the Brahmin teachers in the authority of the *Vedas*. The Buddha contrasts such groundless faith with faith based on inquiry, and calls it *ākāravatī saddhā*.

5. *Sarvadarśanasangraha*, p. 14.

Ākāravatī saddhā and *avecca ppasāda* appear to be referring to similar states of mind. See BHAKTI.

In the *Caṅkī Sutta* the Buddha is represented as applying the same reason for rejecting both *anussava* and *saddhā* as guaranteeing the truth of a statement. He says that one may have firm faith in the truth of a statement but that statement may be false. It is unlikely that the attitude expressed here excludes the doctrines preached by the Buddha. We find the early Buddhist attitude re-echoed in a much later work which says: "Just as wise men test gold by burning, cutting and rubbing, so O monks, should my statements be accepted after examination and not out of respect for me."[6] In the *Vīmaṃsaka Sutta* the Buddha invites his disciples to test him in order to discover whether he is enlightened or not (*vimaṃsakena bhikkhunā ...tathāgate samannesanā kātabbā sammāsambuddho vā no vā iti viññāṇāya*. *M*. I p. 317) The inquiry is to be made into the condition of the Buddha's mind by observing the Buddha's bodily and verbal behaviour using one's eyes and ears (*dvisu dhammesu tathāgato samannesitabbo cakkhusotaviññeyyesu dhammesu*). In the *Caṅkī Sutta* a similar process of inquiry is proposed to someone who wishes to depend on a teacher in one's inquiry into truth. Before one professes faith in a teacher one should, according to the *Caṅkī Sutta*, examine the character traits of the teacher to see if he is a person who has a greedy, hateful or deluded psychological disposition or not. In the *Vimaṃsaka Sutta* the Buddha calls upon his disciples to do this inquiry on himself by observing the Buddha's behaviour as stringently as possible to ensure that he is possessed of absolutely pure psychological dispositions. This sutta suggests that even the Buddha's claim to full enlightenment is not an impenetrable mystery, but one that could be tested by an external observer. If the Buddha is enlightened, he must be free from greed, hatred and delusion. If observation of the behaviour of the Buddha shows that he is not free from those evil traits of mind, then the claim to be enlightened can also be judged to be false. In this sutta inquiry into the claims of the Buddha is not condemned, but is strongly recommended before one professes faith in him. Yet this is given merely as an initial stage in the development of one's faith. After such inquiry one becomes convinced that it is worth approaching such a teacher for instruction. But faith in the teacher is said to become firm and unshakable only when one partially verifies in one's own experience the truths taught by such a teacher. It is such faith that is established as a consequence of inquiry that Buddhism called 'rational faith' (*ākāravatī saddhā*) as opposed to the baseless faith (*amūlikā saddhā*) of the Brahmins.

In Buddhism faith (*saddhā*) was considered as a preliminary requirement, finally leading to knowledge (*paññā* or *ñāṇa*). Some sutta passages clearly suggest that ultimately *saddhā* has to be replaced by knowledge. Citta, a lay disciple of the Buddha is represented as saying in answer to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta's question whether he believed in the Buddha's statement that there is a state of meditative rapture in which there is no discursive thought and reflection (*saddhāhasi tvaṃ samaṇassa Gotamassa atthi avitakko avicāro samādhi atthi vitakkavicārānaṃ nirodho ti* says that it is something he directly knows and sees, and that there is no need for him to accept it on faith in any teacher (*so khvāhaṃ evaṃ jānanto evaṃ passanto kassañño samaṇassa vā brāhmaṇassa vā saddhāya gamissāmi*). It is also said in this context that knowledge is better than faith (*saddhāya kho ñāṇaṃ eva paṇītataraṃ*: *S*. IV. p. 298 f.) The Buddhist saint must be in a position to claim the highest knowledge without having to depend on faith (*aññatra saddhāya aññaṃ vyākareyya*). The *Dhammapada* (v. 97) describes the Arahant as devoid of faith (*assaddho*: *A*. iii, p. 39; *D*. ii. p. 155) This early Buddhist attitude towards faith is expressed later too in the words of Nāgārjuna who says: "One associate with the teaching out of faith, but one knows as it realy is through understanding: understanding (*prajñā*) is superior although faith precedes it.[7]

However, this evaluation of faith as inferior to knowledge appears to belong to an earlier stratum of the Pali canon. With the later attribution of omniscience to the Buddha and the attempt to sharply distinguish the enlightenment of the Buddha from the attainment of the disciples which became much more pronounced in the later Mahāyāna literature, the Buddhist attitude towards the Buddha's authority and the evaluation of faith in Buddhism came closer to that of theistic religions. In the opinion of K. N. Jayatilleke the attempt to distinguish the knowledge of the Buddha from that of the *arahant* has already begun in the later phase of the development of the Pali canon. The emergence of the concept of a saint who is released by intellectual

6. *Tattvasangraha*, 3588.
7. *Śraddhatvād bhajate dharmaṃ*
   prajñatvād vetti tattvataḥ
   Prajñā pradhānam tvanayoḥ
   Śraddhā pūrvaṅgamasya tu
   The Ratnāvalī of Nāgārjuna, ed. G. Tucci, *JRAS*, April 1934, p. 309.

knowledge alone (*paññāvimutta*) is explained by Jaya-tilleke as a consequence of the development of the belief in the omniscience of the Buddha. According to this concept of the enlightened saint, one could become enlightened purely through intellectual conviction of the truth of the specific teachings of the Buddha without having to develop the supercognitive faculties referred to elsewhere under the concept of *abbiññā* (*EBTK* p. 400).

4. The Buddhist Attitude Towards Reason

Out of the ten grounds rejected in the *Kālāma Sutta* four grounds can be identified as involving some kind of reasoning or reflection. These four are (1) *takkahetu*, (2) *nayahetu*, (3) *ākāraparivitakkena* and (4) *diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā*. In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* where the various philosophical dogmas which are said to have been in existence during the time of the Buddha are enumerated, some dogmas are categorically stated to be based on reasoning and speculative reflection (*takkapariyāhatam vīmaṃsānucaritaṃ sayampaṭibhāṇaṃ*). In order to determine the early Buddhist attitude towards reason it is important to examine the references in the Pali canon to the class of thinkers who are described as *takkī* and *vīmaṃsī*.

There is evidence of people who were skilled debators. They are said to have participated in public debates, sometimes with the intention of proving their own theses or with the intention of rationally demolishing the theories of others. One such person mentioned in the suttas is Saccaka who is described as one who displayed his wisdom and skill in debate (*bhassapavādako paṇḍitavādo*; see also DEBATE). The Pali suttas also speak of recluses and Brahmins who had mastered the theories of others, wise and subtle hairsplitters, who went about shattering the theories of others with their intelligence (*paṇḍitā nipuṇā kataparappavādā vālavedhirūpā vobhindantā maññe paññāgatena diṭṭhigatāni*: *D.* I. p. 26). The Pali suttas contain evidence to the effect that some thinkers during the time of the Buddha affirmed definite theories about the nature of man and the universe. Some of these theories were constructed by *takka* and also defended by means of it. The *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta* which presents the Buddha's attitude towards philosophical controversies and debates, says that people come to judgements about the truth or falsity of speculative theories in the context of the debate by employing *takka* (*takkañca diṭṭhisu pakappayitvā saccaṃ musā ti dvaya dhammaṃ āhu*, *Sn.* v. 886). There is evidence that there were proponents of different theories about the nature of reality and that these theories were publicly propounded and defended by adducing reasons in favour of them. The use of the terms *sutakkita* (well reasoned) and *duttakkita* (ill reasoned) suggests that there was a conception of valid and invalid reasoning at this time. Certain rules of argumentative procedure for determining the validity of an argument also seem to have been accepted (*EBTK* p. 20 f.)

Buddhaghosa, commenting on the word *takkī* lists four types of reasoners, namely, (1) *anussutiko*, (2) *jātissaratakki*, (3) *lābhitakkiko* and (4) *suddhatakkiko*. The first type reasoned on the basis of traditional authority, report or revelation. The second and third types reasoned on the basis of some super cognitive experience obtained by means of meditation. The fourth type depended on pure reason. According to what Buddhaghosa says, a pure reasoner argues in the form "If A is true then P is true and if B is true then P is not true." It is not clear from the way Buddhaghosa puts it whether it is a strictly deductive form of argument based on self-evident premises as in the case of rationalist metaphysicians in the Western philosophical tradition. However, the description *suddhatakkiko* used by Buddhaghosa to distinguish this type of reasoner suggests that the reference is to those who did not depend on empirical premises or statements based on traditional authority in their reasoning.

The expression *nayahetu* is also used to denote a kind of rationalist criterion for accepting something as true. The Jains were well known during this period as a class of teachers who talked about a doctrine of standpoints on the basis of which the truth of a proposition is to be judged.

The next term which denotes some form of reasoning is *ākāraparivitakka*. The commentary explains it as "accepting something thinking this is a good reason for accepting it" (*sundaraṃ idaṃ kāraṇaṃ ti evaṃ kāraṇaparivitakkena*, *AA.*, II. p. 305). It is most probably a reference to a superficial examination of reasons. Another ground falling within the same category is *diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti*. The commentary explains it as accepting something because it agrees with a view that one holds with conviction after reflecting on it (*amhākaṃ nijjhāyitvā khamanti ruccati gahitadiṭṭhiyā saddhiṃ sameti*, *AA.* II. p. 305). There is no reason to doubt this commentarial explanation.

Out of all the above terms used to mean some form of reasoning *takka* appears to take the foremost place. This is perhaps why it is the first to be mentioned among four terms occurring in the *Kālāma Sutta*. According to the *Sandaka Sutta* a system based on reason and speculation like one which depends on revelation, traditional authority or report, is unsatisfactory. For such a system may or may not be well reasoned (*sutakkitampi hoti duttakkitampi hoti*) and whether it is well reasoned or ill reasoned will have no bearing on its truth or

falsity (*tathā pi hoti aññathā pi noti: M.* I p. 520). The same criticism applies to other forms of the application of reason to come to conclustion about what is true.

The above criticism of *takka* may be construed as a logical or an epistemological criticism. Early Buddhism appears to have criticized the attempt to construct metaphysical theories or the attempt to defend metaphysical dogmas already held by resorting to *takka*. This is implicit in the Buddha's refusal to answer categorically, certain questions of a metaphysical or transcendental nature by leaving them aside as *avyākata* (undeclared). Apart from the logical and epistemological reason stated in the *Sandaka Sutta* for rejecting the consistency of reasoning as the sole ground for the determination of the truth of a particular thesis, the Buddha also had numerous empirical reasons for rejecting it. In the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta* where the Buddha's attitude towards philosophical debates is expressed, reason is considered as a tool used by most people to rationalize their prejudices, propensities, proclivities, likes and dislikes. In most instances reason functions only as an aid to safeguard the dogmas that one already clings to. Those who rely on their argumentative skill have little respect for truth, and once they cling to an opinion they get strongly attached to the opinion itself. The Buddha considered this as a source of ideological conflict. Such conflict was considered by the Buddha to be spiritually harmful. In the *Cūḷaviyūha Sutta* the Buddha says: "One stands in judgement according to one's own criteria, and enters into controversy in the world. But leaving aside all judgements let not one come into conflict in the world" (*Sn. v.* 894). The Mahāviyūha *Sutta*, which also deals with philosophical debates says: "The doctrine which is claimed to be the highest by some is called inferior by others. which among these doctrines is the true one? They all claim to be experts" (*Sn. v.* 903). The Buddha sees the spiritually mature person, the real sage (*muni*) as one who shuns debates and philosophical controversy (*Sn.* v. 912). In the *Cūḷaviyūha Sutta* it is said: "Each claiming oneself to be an expert clings to one's own view and comes into dispute with others saying 'One who understands this, knows the truth; whoever rejects this is imperfect" (*Sn. v.* 878). This attitude, according to the Buddha only results in making a person puffed up with pride. Such people are overwhelmed by the passion for their own views (*sandiṭṭhirāgena hi eke bhirattā*) and this obsession with their own dogmas becomes a great source of dejection and despair. Thus in the Buddha's opinion *takka* is not merely an unreliable means of knowledge, but also a much abused intellectual instrument of the spiritually immature person.

The teaching of the Buddha is sometimes described as one beyond the scope of *takka* and one that wise people are capable of realizing (*atakkāvacaro paṇḍitavedaniyo*). It is sometimes suggested that it is with reference to the absolute and ultimate Truth that the Buddha claimed this transcendence of reason. This absolute Truth is sometimes identified with *Nibbāna*. The Buddha's reluctance to speak about the after death state of the person who attains ultimate *Nibbāna* is interpreted as suggesting a transcendental ontological reality which is beyond the grasp of language and logic. However, it is difficult to find any evidence in the Pali canon to conclude that the Buddha considered *Nibbāna* to be anything other than the elimination of suffering and the attainment of tranquillity. As far as the attainment of *Nibbāna* concerns the living experience of the person who attains it, it can be described by means of language. There does not seem to be any evidence in the Pali Nikāyas to suggest that the Buddha believed in an inexpressible or ineffable ultimate reality as opposed to what could be expressed and understood in terms of language and logic. The Buddha's criticism of *takka* applies mainly to those who attempt to construct metaphysical theories without any concern for experiential facts. The Noble Truths of Buddhism are distinguished from the metaphysical dogmas that are the products of speculative reason, for the former are believed to be based on intersubjectively verifiable experiential facts while the latter have no experiential basis, and consequently are unverifiable. It is to convey this sense of the experiential verifiability of the teaching of the Buddha that it is said to be beyond the scope of reason.

Although the Buddha has sometimes been called a rationalist there does not seem to be any justification for this if the term 'rationalist' is taken in its strictly philosophical sense. The term 'rationalism' is used in the western philosophical tradition to signify an epistemological doctrine which is in direct opposition to the one described as empiricism (q.v.) Rationalist philosophers in the West were those who constructed deductive systems of philosophy based on self-evident first principles. According to rationalist epistemology human knowledge is a superstucture built on the foundations of the deliverances of reason. The basic propositions of rationalist systems are not statements of sense experiences, but of intellectual intuitions which have the status of indubitable truths. There is no evidence that the Buddha founded any of his teachings on such self-evident premises. The Buddha rejects the criticism of Sunakkhatta who describes him as one who does not depend on any extraordinary knowledge, but depends for his teachings on reasoning and speculation (*M.* I p. 68).

Although Buddhism does not advocate reason as a sure way of reaching truth, the Buddhist teachings have often been presented in such a way that they have a rational appeal. In the *Apaṇṇaka Sutta* for instance

where the Buddha addresses his teaching to the rational elite of the time (*viññu*), who were inclined to be sceptical about the Buddhist teaching of rebirth, he advises them to lead a good life purely on rational considerations. The Buddha points out that if there is another birth, as affirmed by those who claim to have knowledge of it, a person who does not lead a good life will lose both worlds, while a person who leads a good life will stand to gain in both worlds. On the other hand even if there is no rebirth, if one lives a good life one is honoured by others for one's moral qualities in this life itself. There are also instances in which the Buddha reasoned with those who held views that contradicted his teaching. In the *Upali Sutta* for instance, the Buddha is seen to be arguing in Socratic fashion, leading his opponent by a process of questioning to contradict his own assumption (*M.* I. p. 376-378). Although logical consistency in itself was not considered to be a mark of truth, the Buddha believed that what one holds to be true needs to be logically consistent.

5.1. The Buddhist Analysis of Knowledge

We have seen that the Buddha rejected both authority and reason and recommended direct personal knowledge as the sure way of reaching truth. The Buddha rejects other grounds for accepting a belief as true. For a belief based on those grounds could turn out to be true or false. Emphasis on personal and direct knowledge is found throughout the Nikāyas. Direct knowledge and vision of what is claimed to be true is frequently attributed to the Buddha. The Buddha is described as one who knows and sees (*jānaṃ jānāti passaṃ passati*, *M.* I. p. III). He is often called the knowing and seeing one (*jānatā passatā*, ibid). Even those who follow the holy life prescribed by the Buddha are expected to do so in order that they may know, see, attain, realize and comprehend what they have not so far known, seen, attained, realized or comprehended (*yam...aññātaṃ adiṭṭhaṃ appattaṃ asacchikataṃ anabhisametaṃ tassa ñāṇāya dassanāya pattiyā sacchikiriyāyā abhisamayāya bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ vussatiti*, *A.* IV. p. 384). It is important to see that the Buddha was interested in a special variety of truth, namely, truth that leads to liberation. The truths of the Buddha are distinguished from other truths by describing them as noble truths (*ariyasaccāni*). While using a variety of terms signifying a variety of cognitive activity, Buddhism seems to distinguish a form of knowledge in evaluative terms, as noble or higher knowledge (*ariyañāṇa*). What is of special importance to Buddhism is this emancipating knowledge for the cultivation of which Buddhism prescribes a systematic and detailed procedure. From a general epistemological standpoint it is important to see how this special knowledge is different from other forms of knowledge that Buddhism itself refers to by a variety of cognitive terms.

The Pali Nikayas express distinctions in modes of knowing by varying the prefix which is attached to the root *jñā*, each variation signifying a difference in the level of cognitive activity or a difference in the perspective from which the cognitive activity is performed. The terms that occur most frequently in the suttas are the following:

saṃ + jñā = *saññā* (noun), *sañjānāti* (verb)
vi + jñā = *viññāṇa* (noun), *vijānāti* (verb)
abhi + jñā = *abhiññā* (noun), *abhijānāti* (verb)
pari + jñā = *pariññā* (noun), *parijānāti* (verb)
pra + jñā = *paññā* (noun), *pajānāti* (verb)

Like the English term 'knowledge', *ñāṇa* in Pali can be taken as the cognitive term used in the most generic sense. From the Buddhist point of view the same objective existence can be cognized from a variety of ways. The manner in which cognitive terms are treated in Buddhism suggests that all knowing does not conform to a single pattern, but that knowing is relative to the various needs and purposes of conscious rational beings. The world of experience can be known in the *saññā*, *viññāṇa* or the *paññā* ways. *Saññā* and *viññāṇa* are not forms of knowing which give emancipating knowledge. These two forms of cognitive experience are to be handled cautiously as they could lead to bondage and suffering. The noble truths are to be grasped not by the ordinary cognitive processes of *saññā* and *viññāṇa*, but by the special cognitive processes called *abhiññā*, *pariññā* and *paññā*. However these latter processes are distinguished from dependence on authority, speculative reason or faith.

5.2 Ordinary sense cognition, *saññā* and *viññāṇa*.

A brief examination of the variety of cognitive terms used in early Buddhism is useful to gain clarity about the Buddhist concept of knowledge. The Pali Nikāyas explain *saññā* as that mode of cognition which arises on the occasion of the meeting of a particular sense-organ with the corresponding sense object. The standard description of this process of cognition as found in the Pali Nikāyas is as follows:

"Depending on the eye and material forms there arises visual *viññāṇa*. By the coming together of these three arises sense impingement. Depending on sense impingement arises sensation. That which one senses one "knows in the *saññā* way."[8]

8. *Cakkhuca paṭcca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuviññānam Tiṇṇam saṅgati phasso. Phassapaccayā vedanā. Yam vedeti taṃ sañjānāti. M.* I. p. 293.

The question that arises here is what "knowing in the *saññā* way" signifies. It is possible to interpret *viññāṇa* in the passage quoted above as mere sensory awareness and *saññā* as a subsequent stage in the process of perceptual activity.[9]

Saññā may be considered as a stage where distinctions are introduced into the primitive sensation by selective attention. Although this interpretation does not seem to agree with the commentarial explanation of the Theravāda tradition, it appears to be justified by the Pali canonical suttas. The activity of *saññā* seems to depend on repeated perceptual experience as well as the mind's ability to formulate ideas and recognize the sensory environment in terms of them. The treatment of *saññā* in the Nikāyas suggests that there is no uniform manner in which the sensory environment should be cognized from the *saññā* perspective. According to Buddhism *saññā* do not represent indelible Forms or Ideas in the Platonic sense imprinted in the Soul of a person, but they are variable depending on the way one trains oneself. *Saññā* response like other perceptual responses is a conditioned response. According to the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*, by training, some types of *saññā* could emerge and other types could cease to be (*sikkhā ekā saññā uppajjanti, sikkhā ekā saññā nirujjhanti: D.* I, p. 183). The training mentioned in this context probably refers to the systematic meditative cultivation of the mind to experience reality in certain mentally determined modes. *Saññā* is altered in accordance with these mental determinations. According to the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta* it is possible for a person to transcend altogether the *saññā* experience of material form, put an end to the experience of the resistance of material objects, withdraw the mind's attention from the experience of a plurality of objects and enter into and abide in a state of mental rapture in which the *saññā* experience would be of infinite space (*sabbaso rūpasaññānaṃ samatikkamma paṭighasaññānaṃ atthagamā nānatta-saññānaṃ: amanasikārā anantoākāso ti ākāsānañcāyatanaṃ upasampajja viharati... ākāsānañcayatana sukhumasaccasaññātasmiṃ samaye hoti*).

Saññā, from the Buddhist point of view is a way of cognition which has to be transcended. Buddhism recognizes a stage of meditative rapture of the mind in which *saññā* completely ceases. *Saññā* is believed to lead to bondage and suffering through the process of *papañca*, a process which involves a proliferation of concepts in the mind linked to the notion of self and associated with the unwholesome emotions of craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and dogmatic belief (*diṭṭhi*). The *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* describes this psychological process as follows:

That which one "knows in the *saññā* way" one thinks about. One gets obsessed with that which one thinks about. Due to this (obsession) one is assailed by the ideas of conceptual proliferation with regard to the past, present and future material forms which are cognizable by means of visual *viññāṇa*.[10]

Early Buddhism considers *saññā* as the characteristic cognitive response of the unenlightened individual. According to the *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, the *saññā* response to any category of experience inclusive of the four material elements to which the whole of material reality can be reduced, all the data of the senses (*diṭṭha, suta, muta*), meditative experiences and even the highest spiritual category conceptualized as *Nibbāna* involves an unenlightened response and consequently leads to bondage and misery (*M.* I, p.3).

Saññā is here contrasted with two cognitive perspectives of a different type called *pariññā* and *abhiññā*. These latter cognitive responses are those that the Buddha's disciples are expected to cultivate. The disciples are advised to cultivate *pariññā* with respect to *saññā* itself in order to attain emancipation (*saññaṃ pariññā vitareyya oghaṃ Sn. v. 779*).

Viññāṇa too, like *saññā* is distinguished from the cognitive perspectives referred to as *abhiññā*, *pariññā* and *paññā*. *Viññāṇa*, as represented in the standard formulation of the perceptual process in the Pali Nikāyas, appears to refer to the perceptual awareness of the respective senses prior to conceptualization. However, usage in the Pali canon appears to vary according to context and there are instances where *viññāṇa* occurs in the sense of ordinary perceptual knowledge as distinguished from *paññā*, the higher knowledge of the saint. The *viññāṇa* response, considered in the suttas as requiring no special effort for its cultivation, unlike the *paññā* response is also said to be associated with dangers like the *saññā* response.

5.3. Higher forms of Cognition — the concept of *abhiññā*

Reference has already been made to the Buddhist claim that the Buddhist way of life and the world view on which it is based is derived from a special way of knowing called *abhiññā*. According to the *Saṅgārava*

10. *Yaṃ saṃjānāti taṃ vitakketi, yaṃ vitakketi taṃ papañceti yaṃ papañceti tatonidānaṃ purisaṃ papañcasaññāsaṅkhā samudācaranti atītanāgata-paccuppannesu cakkhuviññeyyesu rūpesu: M.* I, p. 11. 111.

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Sutta, the Buddha claims to be one of those who based the teachings about the holy life on 'a personal higher knowledge'. This suggests that there were others too before and during his time who made similar claims. According to K. N. Jayatilleke, the thinkers of the Middle and Late *Upaniṣadis* who emphasized *jñāna* or knowledge, favouring the *jñānamārga* instead of the earlier *karmamārga* can be identified with this group of thinkers. More specifically Jayatilleke believes that they were the Upanisadic thinkers who rejected both the traditional authority of the *Vedas* and the intellectual or rational knowledge of the early *Upaniṣads* and held that access to the deepest truths about reality can be had in the rapturous states of *yoga* meditation (*EBTK*, pp. 61, 417 f.) It was believed to be a kind of direct intuitive knowledge. Such claims appear to have been made by other contemporaries of the Buddha as well, like some of the Ājivaka teachers and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta. Jayatilleke argues that despite the similarity between this claim to an extraordinary means of knowledge made by the Buddha and other contemporary teachers, the Buddhists do not treat such knowledge as mystical, but as natural causal accompaniments of mental discipline and composure.

The prefix *abhi* in *abhiññā* signifies 'superiority' 'speciality', 'extraordinariness' or 'greatness'. Accordingly, the term *abhiññā* can best be rendered into English as 'supercognition'. An examination of the variety of cognitive powers comprehended under *abhiññā* in Buddhism is useful in understanding this concept.

The Pali Nikāyas enumerate the following six forms of *abhiññā*: (1) *iddhividha*, (2) *dibbasota*, (3) *paracitta-vijānana*, (4) *pubbenivāsānussati*, (5) *dibbacakkhu*, and (6) *āsavakkhaya*. (q.vv.). Out of these, what is said to be unique to Buddhism is the sixth one, 'knowledge of the destruction of the cankers.

Buddhism recognized a causal relation between the attainment of mental composure and the emergence of super-cognitive abilities. Except for *āsavakkhayañāṇa* which Buddhism claims to be its distinctive contribution, it acknowledged the genuineness of the claims of others to have possessed super-cognitive abilities. The Pali Nikāyas mention certain doctrines held by pre-Buddhist teachers on the nature of the world and the individual on the basis of super-cognitive experience. The eternalist theory that the soul and the world are eternal (*sassato attā ca loko ca*) is said to have been based on the super-cognitive ability of some recluses and brahmins to remember their previous existences (*D.* I, p. 14). This experience of the memory of previous existences (*pubbenivāsānussati*) is said to occur in the rapturous state of mind generated by means of effort, exertion and application of the mind (*ātappam anvāya padhānam anvaya anuyogam anvāya tathārūpam cetosamādhim phusatiyathā samāhite citte anekavihitam pubbenivāsam anussarati*). Speaking of the progressive meditative development of the mind in the Buddhist attempt to incline the mind to the attainment of the super-cognitive knowledge and vision it is said in the Pali Nikayas that this becomes possible when the mind reaches a very advanced stage of composure, clarity, purity, pliability and steadfastness (*so evam samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgaṇe vigatūpakkilese mudubhūte kammaniye ṭhite āneñjappatte pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇāya cittam abhinīharati abhininnāmeti. D.* I, p. 81).

Iddhividha (q.v.) the first *abhiññā* recognized in Buddhism cannot strictly be described as a form of knowing, the content of which can be formulated in propositions. It is explained as an extraordinary ability to perform certain acts like walking on water, levitation, etc.

Dibbacakkhu (clairvoyance q.v.) and *dibbasota* (clairaudience q.v.) can be classed together in that they merely involve an extension of the sensory capacities of the visual and the auditory sense. *Dibbacakkhu*, of which *cutūpapātañāṇa* (q.v. the knowledge of the passing away and arising of beings) is said to be a particular application, is the ability to experience visually, contemporaneous events beyond the range of one's normal power of vision. The passing away of other beings and their arising in accordance with their character traits is said to be seen by means of this super-cognitive ability. The experiential basis for the Buddhist theory of *kamma* is believed to be *cutūpapātañāṇa*, which is a special application of *dibbacakkhu*. According to the evidence contained in the Pali Nikāyas *dibbacakkhu* can be exercised only for the purpose of seeing contemporaneous events, and therefore, it is not a means by which one could directly witness the past or the future. It is also a noteworthy feature of the Buddhist theory of *abhiññā* that it is admitted that in order to develop and exercise *dibbacakkhu* the ordinary physical eye is necessary as its natural causal basis. According to the *Itivuttaka*, the presence of the physical eye is necessary for the operation of *dibbacakkhu* (*maṃsacakkhussa uppādo maggo dibbassa cakkhuno. It.* p. 52). This idea is confirmed in the following *Milindapañha* passage:

> It is said in the sutta that when the causal ground is destroyed, in the absence of the cause, in the absence of the basis there is no arising of *dibbacakkhu* (*hetusamugghāte ahetusmiṃ avatthumhi natthi dibbacakkhussa uppādo ti sutte vuttaṃ*, p. 119).

What is referred to as the causal ground here is clearly the physical eye.

The Pali Nikāyas do not speak of the possibility of extending the capacity of the senses of smell, taste and touch by *abhiññā* but only of vision and hearing. There is also no admission of a super-cognitive power capable of directly cognizing the past or the future. The past is known only by retracing the memory, the experience of which is characterized as *satānusāri viññāṇam*. The only certain knowledge that the Buddha claims about the future is what he claims to be the knowledge born out of his enlightenment that there is no rebecoming for him in the future (*anāgataṃ kho addhānaṃ ārabbha tathāgatassa bodhijam ñāṇam uppajjati ayam antimā jāti natthi dāni punabbhavoti: D.* III. p. 134). *Dibbacakkhu* was not admitted as a means of direct access to the past or the future although this is how it is often popularly conceived.

Cetopariyañāṇa (q.v.) enables a person to examine directly and comprehend by one's own mind the mental traits in the mind of another. By this means one could know whether another person's mind is lustful or free from lust, hateful or free from hatred and so on (*so parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ cetasā ceto paricca pajānāti sarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ sarāgaṃ cittan ti pajānāti... D.* I, p. 79).

Pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa (q.v.) is said to be an extension of one's memory into the past beyond one's present life experience. It does not enable a person to have any direct access into a past occurrence, but only to recall one's own previous memory experiences, just as one would recall the past experiences of the present life. This is what was referred to above as *satānusāri viññāṇaṃ*. This type of super-cognitive ability was considered as one of the experiential bases for the Buddhist theory of rebirth.

What remains to be examined is *āsavakkhayañāṇa* (q.v.) the highest and that which is claimed to be unique to Buddhism. The term itself contains the meaning that it is a kind of self transforming knowledge. Where the Pali Nikāyas refer to this knowledge it is invariably associated with the insight into the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, the understanding of the three characteristics of being and the comprehension of the law of dependent co-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). *Āsavakkhayañāṇa* can be understood first, as the knowledge which brings about the eradication of the cankers and secondly, as the introspective knowledge of one's liberated condition of mind.

It is clear from the above account that the early Buddhist notion of *abhiññā* leaves no room for any mysterious objects to be apprehended by an extraordinary intuition. Out of the six super-cognitive powers recognized in Buddhism, in (2) to (5) there is no recognition of a cognitive content that is other than material forms (*rūpa*), the data of vision, sound (*sadda*), the data of hearing, or some mental content such as a memory experience or the mental condition of another person. In Buddhism these super-cognitive powers are valued merely because they are believed to augment our factual knowledge of the world which is ordinarily restricted due to certain natural limitations in our sensory capacities. However, Buddhism does not consider these cognitive powers as inherently capable of leading to infallible truths about the nature of existence. Some recluses and Brahmins who possessed these powers are said to have reached erroneous conclusions about the nature of reality on the basis of the data of such super-cognitive experience. In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* for instance, some metaphysical theories described as eternalism and semi-eternalism are said to be based on the super-cognitive experience of the memory of past lives. Buddhism appears to have given special importance to three of the *abhiññā* classing them under the concept of *tevijjā*. It is to be noted that the Buddha himself preferred to be called one possessed of *tevijjā*, rather than being called 'omniscient' (*sabbaññu*) in the sense omniscience was claimed by some of his contemporaries. The three kinds of knowledge included under *tevijjā* in Buddhism were (1) *pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa*, (2) *cutūpapātañāṇa* and (3) *āsavakkhayañāṇa* The first two had a special significance to Buddhism because they were believed to be the means of experientially verifying the truths of rebirth and *karma*, which in turn was believed to contribute to the attainment of the final knowledge described as *āsavakkhayañāṇa*.

Āsavakkhayañāṇa, which is claimed to be unique to Buddhism is itself not a mysterious vision into a supra-sensible or absolute reality, but a cognitive approach or perspective with reference to experiential reality which tends to bring about a certain psychological and attitudinal transformation. It is constant meditative reflection on certain observable realities, observable even by the methods of ordinary observation, that produces what Buddhism called *āsavakkhayañāṇa*. Analytical and introspective observation of the physical and mental nature which constitutes empirical reality, directed to the comprehension of their *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* character as recommended in the *satipaṭṭhāna* method of developing insight is what produces the self-transforming knowledge described as *āsavakkhayañāṇa*.

5.4 Higher forms of cognition — of *pariññā* and *paññā*.

According to the *Mūlapariyāya Sutta* (*M.* I, p. 1 ff.) enlightened persons like the Buddha and the saints who have eradicated the cankers have attained *pariññā* with regard to all the data of experience. It is because

they have known things in the *parīññā* way that they are freed from all *dukkha*. *Parīññā* is a cognitive term frequently used in the Pali Nikāyas to signify the comprehensive understanding of the nature of things. According to the *Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta*[11] (*M.* I, p. 83 ff.) one gains comprehensive understanding of *kāma*, *rūpa* and *vedanā*, by knowing them in terms of their satisfaction (*assāda*), their harmful or perilous consequences (*ādīnava*) and the possible freedom from bondage to them (*nissaraṇa*). Here *parīññā* involves no mysterious intuition but a comprehensive understanding of the nature of *kāma*, *rūpa* and *vedanā* by an empirical observation of their multifarious aspects.

Paññā as a stage in the Buddhist path to spiritual perfection is said to be developed on the basis of *sīla* (good conduct) and *samādhi* (mental composure). In indicating the difference between *paññā* and *viññāṇa*, the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* says that unlike *viññāṇa*, *paññā* is a cognitive capacity that ought to be developed (*paññā bhāvetabbā*: *M.* I, p. 292). In the same context the content of the *paññā* way of cognition is given as the four noble truths. Buddhism also uses the term *paññā* when referring to the knowledge of moral distinctions (*kusalañ ca pajānāti kusalamūlañ ca pajānāti*: *D.* I, p. 83). It is the emancipating knowledge, which is insightful and goal-directed, culminating in the destruction of the cankers that Buddhism calls *paññā*. To know something from the perspective of *paññā* does not involve any mysterious intuition, but merely a self-transforming understanding as a result of repeated meditative attention paid to certain empirical features of the nature of reality. A repeated admonition of the Buddha found in the Pali Nikāyas is as follows:

> O monks, material form is impermanent. That which is impermanent is unsatisfactory. That which is unsatisfactory is devoid of substantiality. That which is devoid of substantiality is not mine, I am not that, that is not my self. One ought to see in this manner as it has really come to be with proper *paññā* (*S.* III, p. 32).

Paññā involves much more than a mere knowledge of empirical facts. It involves an intelligent systematization of those facts and an insight into the various connections between the known facts with selective attention in order to achieve a certain goal. It is also to be noted that there are certain prerequisites for the development of the kind of special knowledge which Buddhism calls *paññā*. It requires moral discipline and mental composure, which is not a prerequisite for the kind of knowledge that a natural scientist may have in the form of scientific knowledge. The natural scientist may need a different kind of discipline but not the kind of moral discipline that is required of the person in search of self-transforming wisdom. However there is an empirical content to *paññā* as it is developed on the basis of initial empirical observations on the nature of mental and material reality. The validation of this kind of knowledge depends partly on the fact that it succeeds in achieving the anticipated goal, namely that of transforming oneself, and overcoming suffering. The three cognitive terms *abhiññā*, *parīññā* and *paññā* are clearly distinguishable from the other two *saññā* and *viññāṇa* in the sense that the former are forms of cognition which are specially cultivated directing them towards the achievement of a particular goal.

6. Buddhism and Empiricism

The Buddhist rejection of authority and reason and the emphasis on direct personal knowledge has led some scholars to consider Buddhism as a form of empiricism. K. N. Jayatilleke and D. J. Kalupahana are of the opinion that perception, normal and paranormal, and inductive inference are considered the means of knowing in the Pali Nikāyas.[12] Jayatilleke expresses the opinion that the term *anumāna* has been used in the Pali Nikāyas in the sense of inference. There is no doubt that in the later logical schools of Buddhism such as that of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the term *anumāna* had the technical sense of inference based on a general premise established on the basis of observation. The Pali Nikāyas do not explicitly mention the use of *anumāna* in that sense. However, Jayatilleke observes that a distinction made in the Pali Nikāya period in terms of two types of knowledge called *dhamme ñāṇa* and *anvaye ñāṇa* could be interpreted as knowledge of specific instances of a causal correlation and the knowledge of a general inductive law covering the past, present and the future (*EBTK*. p. 441 f.).

D.J. Kalupahana refers to the *Sabba Sutta* (*S.* IV, p. 15) in support of his view that the acceptance of paranormal experience in Buddhism, does not affect its empiricist position. In the *Sabba Sutta* the Buddha asserts that the question "What is everything?" can be answered by saying "Everything is the eye and material form, ear and sound, nose and odour, tongue and taste, body and tanjible objects, mind and objects of mind." The Buddha adds in this context that anyone who speaks of anything over and above these senses and their corresponding objects cannot make oneself intelligible. In our discussion of *abhiññā* (2) to (5) above it was pointed out that the content of this knowledge is not considered to be any mysterious objects. The data of *dibbacakkhu* for instance is nothing but *rūpa*, which

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11. *Middle Length Sayings* (Pali Text Society), Vol. I, p. 116.
12. *EBTK*, p. 463. See also *Buddhist Philosophy*, D. J. Kalupahana (University Press of Hawaii, 1976), p. 22f.

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is also the data of ordinary vision. The *abhiññā* in the context of the operation of these super-cognitive powers can be conceived merely as extensions of the sensory capacities by means of *yogic* training. Whether such training is in fact possible or not cannot be determined a *priori*, but only on the basis of empirical observation. If such super-cognitive capacities do in fact exist, as sometimes attested by those researching into para-psychological phenomena, there could be no objection to considering them as useful instruments in extending the experiential content of our knowledge. It is due to this reason that it is maintaineed that despite the admission of *abhiññā*, truths in Buddhism have an empirical foundation. A.B. Kerith does not agree with the above position. He treats the special insight of the Buddha as a mystical one not open to any intersubjective empirical verification. According to Keith:

> The Buddha, like the sage of the Upanisad sees things as they truly are (*yathābhūtam*) by a mystic potency, which is quite other than reasoning of the discursive type. The truth of this insight is assured by it alone, for it is obviously incapable of verification in any empirical manner.[13]

Keith's comments do not seem to apply to the content of the higher knowledge claimed on the basis of the *abhiññā* (2) to (5), for it may be argued that at least some of that content is verifiable by means of the ordinary methods of sense observation. Logical objections raised against the claim that one could use paranormal powers to observe certain phenomena that cannot be observed by the ordinary senses such as the occurrence of rebirth and the existence of other realms of existence were countered by early Buddhism by pointing out that the mere fact that some people do not experience them is no reason to reject them. According to Buddhism the acquisition of the paranormal powers of perception are a natural causal consequence of the appropriate mental training. The experience of these faculties can be shared by those who accomplish the required training. In the *Subha Sutta*, a Brahmin youth named Subha expresses the opinion of a Brahmin teacher named Pokkarasāti that the claim of some recluses and Brahmins to possess paranormal powers is an inadmissible false claim. The Buddha's response to this was that those who deny the knowledge of people who possess paranormal powers are like blind men who deny the existence of visible forms, colours and objects merely because they could not experience them (*M.* II, p. 201). It can be argued that there is no reason why the sphere of the empirical could not be extended to include the data of such super-cognitive experience, provided that such data can be found to cohere with the other sense experiences of human beings.

Attention is often drawn to some special features of the Buddha's doctrine in support of the thesis that Early Buddhism can be described as a form of empiricism on epistemological grounds. Buddhism does not posit a first beginning of existence. It also rejects the theistic doctrine involving the notion of a creator God. It explains existential reality on the basis of its principle of dependent co - origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) which cautiously avoids the notion of an uncaused first cause. Buddhism does not posit an absolute beginning for the individual or the universe. Where the Buddha speaks of the universe, he talks only about relative beginnings within a cyclic process of evolution and dissolution (*saṃvaṭṭamāña kappa* and *vivaṭṭamāna kappa*). With regard to the recurring process of becoming which Buddhism calls *saṃsāra* it holds that there is no known beginning. This position is consistent with the Buddhist theory that the main access into the past in experiential terms is through memory. The Buddha held that even a person who has developed the super-cognitive ability to recall his past existences to the highest degree is incapable of finding an absolute beginning. In the Buddha's opinion, some advocates of the theistic belief were misled by their limited super-cognitive experience of the memory of past lives into thinking that they were created by an eternal God. The Buddha appears to have been critical even about the so called mystical or religious experiences as a valid ground for the theistic belief, because he conceived the possibility of misinterpreting such experiences and drawing erroneous conclusions from them. He rejected the Brahmanical doctrine about the path to the attainment of the world of Brahmā on the ground that none of those who spoke about such a path had direct personal knowledge of the existence of Brahmā (*natthi koci tevijjānaṃ brāhmanānaṃ yāva sattamā ācariyamahāyugā yena Brahmā sakkhidiṭṭho: D.* I, p. 239). He compared the effort of the Brahmins with that of one who constructs a ladder to climb a mansion of which the location and dimensions are unknown. The doctrine of an immortal and immutable soul also finds no place in the Buddha's teachings. The Buddha analyzed the person into five component aggregates (*pañcakkhandhā*) and showed that in none of these aggregates is to be found an immutable substantial nature which was then commonly assumed to be the nature of the metaphysical *ātman* and conceived as the real essence of the individual. The Buddha refused to employ reason beyond the limits of human experience and left all questions of a metaphysical nature unanswered. He, like Kant, left the question whether space is finite or infinite unanswered because answering that question would involve an illegitimate use of reason. The Buddha's denial in the *Subha Sutta* referred to above, that there could be anything that can be meaning-

13. *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, A. B. Keith, (Oxford 1923), p. 90.

fully talked about, beyond the six spheres of sense, also points in the same direction. These are very strong reasons in favour of concluding that the Buddha's teaching contained certain positivistic and empiricist features.

However, there are other features of Buddhism which could raise difficulties in an attempt to identify its epistemological position with what came to be regarded as logical positivism and empiricism in the Western philosophical tradition. Philosophers in the Western philosophical tradition have for a long time been engaged in the search for the indubitable foundation of all knowledge combined with the pursuit of a single paradigm to which all knowledge could conform. The rationalists adhered to the view that knowledge has the nature of a deductive system founded upon the indubitable and self-evident truths of reason, while the empiricists insisted on the view that the most certain and indubitable knowledge claims are those about our immediate sense data. The consequence of both points of view have been scepticism with respect to certain areas of human knowledge. The admission of the mind as a sixth sense enables Buddhism to consider reason as a function of the mind. This appears to dissolve the absolute distinction between sense and reason on which the rationalist-empiricist distinction rests. Buddhism is not in disagreement with the empiricist insistence on the significant role of the senses in human knowledge. However, Buddhism does not maintain that the indubitable objects of knowledge are the deliverances of the senses, for it does not get involved in the pursuit of knowledge in the absolutist sense. Instead of turning its attention on absolute objects of knowledge, early Buddhism gives a value orientation to the activity of knowing. Accordingly, its search is directed to forms of knowing which in its view serves best the human interest. There are no forms of knowing which have epistemological finality, whether they be, founded on the senses or on reason. The early Buddhist treatment of the concept of knowledge leaves open the possibility of admitting varieties of knowing relative to the needs and purposes of human beings. In stating the early Buddhist position in more modern terms, it may be said that from the early Buddhist point of view, the ordinary sensory knowledge of the table as a solid object having certain sensory properties such as colour and shape is as valid as the scientist's knowledge of it as an object composed of a molecular structure. The knowledge of the properties of the table, as known in our ordinary sense experience suffices for the various activities that we perform with the table at the level of ordinary day to day experience. So is the scientist's knowledge of the constitution of the physical world which is validated by the various practical consequences of such knowledge. Early Buddhism too, by its notions of *abhiññā*, *pariññā*, *paññā*, *āsavakkhayañāṇa* and *vimuttiñāṇadassana* presents a form of goal directed knowledge which involves the seeing of the empirical world as having the characteristics of change, unsatisfactoriness and insubstantiality. It claims that this knowledge works in that it succeeds in achieving the anticipated goal, and assures that it works for anyone who cares to come and test it in his own experience (*ehipassiko paccattaṃ veditabbo*). Early Buddhism combines a pragmatic approach with a sense of realism in admitting the role of the senses, as well as the intellect in the various forms of human cognition. *Paññā* in early Buddhism is not considered as a form of knowing completely divorced from sense cognition. For according to the analysis presented in the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* of the principal terms having a cognitive import, *paññā* and *viññāṇa* are not absolutely separable cognitive activities. (*Yā ca...paññā yañ ca...viññāṇaṃ ime dhammā saṃsaṭṭhā no visaṃsaṭṭhā, na ca labbhā imesaṃ dhammānaṃ vinibbhujitvā vinibbhujitvā nānākaraṇaṃ paññāpetuṃ: M.* I, p. 292) The objects of *paññā* and *viññāṇa* are not different. That which is the object of *viññāṇa* itself becomes the object of *paññā* as well (*Yaṃ...pajānāti taṃ vijānāti, yaṃ vijānāti taṃ pajānāti*). The difference lies only in the nature of the cognitive response. As we have already mentioned the *paññā* response is not a mere passive response to the sensory presentation, but a specially cultivated and goal directed response. In this respect there is an implicit difference between the Buddhist concept of knowledge and the classical empiricist concept according to which knowledge is conceived as a superstructure erected upon the indubitable foundation of the primitive elements passively received through the senses. Unlike in the case of contemporary Empiricism and Logical Positivism, early Buddhism should have no difficulty in accounting for moral or aesthetic knowledge. For it allows for a variety of cognitive perspectives without confining itself to an absolute perspective alleged to possess epistemological finality.

7. Later Developments in Epistemology

The central concern of early Buddhism was the attainment of inner peace through the eradication of the unwholesome psychological traits and the cultivation of wholesome qualities of mind. It valued the kind of knowledge and insight which was found to be conducive to that goal. All activity which posed a hindrance to this objective was not encouraged in the early teaching. Philosophical debate and controversy was to be avoided by the Buddhist sage. However later Buddhist teachers who were confronted with the intellectual challenges from other systems of Indian Philosophy, sought to introduce greater intellectual precision and logical clarity to the doctrines of Buddhism in order to meet those

challenges. Thus Due to the continuing dialogue, interaction and ideological conflict between Buddhism and other schools of Indian Philosophy like the Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mimāṃsā and Vedānta traditions, a vast literature dealing with logical and epistemological issues on an argumentative basis emerged within the Buddhist tradition as a parallel development with those other schools. All principal schools of Indian Philosophy were engaged in the task of determining the nature of right knowledge, and examining the grounds for accepting the validity of knowledge claims. According to the Indian usage of that time they were interested in determining the valid *pramāṇas* resulting in what was known as *prāmāṇya-vāda* (epistemological theory). In these developments an effort has been made by renowned Buddhist teachers far removed from the time in which the Buddha lived, to preserve the fundamental elements of the early teaching, despite the sophistication and analytical skill displayed in their treatises sometimes exclusively devoted to the treatment of issues on logic and epistemology. The masters Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Dharmottara, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla for instance can be considered as foremost among the illustrious teachers of later Buddhism who contributed enormously not only to the philosophy of Buddhism but also to Indian logic and epistemology in general. These Buddhist teachers engaged in the discussion of epistemological issues with the intention of revealing the natural and general logic of the human understanding. They did not intend to derive their doctrines directly from Buddhism as a religious system or as a path towards salvation. Therefore their discussions are not confined to the validation of Buddhist notions, but have a general philosophical significance. An attempt will be made in the sequel to treat very briefly some principal aspects of these later developments.

In the *Nyāya Bindu* of Dharmakīrti and the commentary to the same text by Dharmottara, there is an attempt to analyze the two main sources of knowledge that later Buddhism recognized.[14] According to Dharmottara's commentary to *Nyāya Bindu* all successful human action is preceded by right knowledge. Right cognition is defined as successful cognition. It is knowledge that is not contradicted by experience. Knowledge is right when it makes us reach the goal which it points to (*pradarśitam artham prāpayan samvādakam ucyate*).[15] Buddhism retained its opposition to reliance on the authority of the *Vedas* and criticized the Mimāmsakas, the most orthodox theologians of the old Brahmanical sacrificial religion. The Mimāmsakas attempted to defend a theory of eternal sound in order to safeguard the authority of the *Vedas*. They believed that the meaning of a word (*śabdārtha*) is an eternal object, and held that the Vedic statements represent eternal and enduring truths. The Buddhists did not use the term *artha*, in the sense of an eternal object. Therefore the Buddhist definition of knowledge was opposed to the idea of absolute objects of knowledge, and it inclined more towards a pragmatist definition. According to the opinion of these Buddhist teachers right cognition is successful cognition. It is cognition followed by a successful action.[16] According to Dharmottara, right knowledge is twofold. It is either instinctive or discursive. In the case of the latter, we direct our attenion to a possible object of successful action through a process of remembering, willing, acting and reaching the desired goal. Buddhist teachers undertook to analyze this discursive thought, leaving aside cases where purposive action appears directly and aims are attained straight off as in the case of instinctive knowledge (ibid. p. 61) According to their analysis, sensibility is the primary source of our knowledge of reality whereas the intellect produces the forms of this knowledge, and the verbal expression of the cognitive process is made in terms of the syllogism.

The Buddhist insistence on the empirical foundations of human knowledge, which is a characteristic of early Buddhist teachings is reiterated in the discussions of these later Buddhist philosophers. The Mimāmsaka view that scriptural statements need no further validation but are self-validated is criticized by the Buddhist teachers. Kamalaśīla, for instance rejects the view of the Jaiminiyas who maintained that all our sources of knowledge in general are right by themselves in their attempt to establish the authority of scripture. According to the Buddhist teachers, right knowledge is efficient knowledge, and it is through consistent experience that truth becomes established.

In the *Nyāya Bindu* Dharmakīrti says that there are two varieties of right knowledge, namely, perception and inference (*dvividham samyagjñānam pratyakṣam anumānam ca*). In Dharmottara's commentary perceptual knowledge is explained as any knowledge that makes the object appear before us directly (*yat kimcidarthasya sākṣātkārijñānam tatpratyakṣamucyate*). Dharmottara, observes that although according to the etymological meaning of the term *pratyakṣa*, it stands for sense-knowledge, by usage it includes other forms of direct knowing. Dharmakīrti and Dharmottara recognize

14. *Dvividham samyagjñānam pratyakṣam anumānam ca, Nyāya Bindu*, edited by Peter Peterson, (Bibilotheca Indica Calcutta, 1889). Chapter 1.
15. *Buddhist Logic*, Th. Stcherbatsky (Mouton & Co. Printers, The Hauge, 1958), Vol. II, translation of *Nyāya Bindu* and its commentary, p. 4; *Nyāya Bindu Tīkā*, edited by Peter Peterson, (*Bibliotheca Indica* Calcutta, 1889), p. 3.
16. *Buddhist Logic*, Th. Stcherbatsky (Leningrad 1932), Vol. I, p. 59.

four varieties of perceptual or direct knowledge. They are (1) sense knowledge (*indriyajñāna*), knowledge of the five senses, (2) mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), which corresponds to the sixth sense admitted in the early Buddhist teachings, (3) self consciousness with respect to all inner mental phenomena such as pleasure and pain (*cittacaittānam ātmasamvedanam*) and (4) the knowledge of the Yogi which arises on account of meditation on reality (*bhūtārthabāvanāprakarṣaparyantajam yogijñānam*). It is important to note that the later Buddhists in keeping with the early Buddhist position that even the highest knowledge of the Buddha is experiential and perceptual include under their notion of direct perceptual knowledge (*pratyakṣa*), what early Buddhism included under super-cognitive experience.

Explaining the term *anumāna* used in the technical sence of inference Dharmottara says:

> (The word for inference means etymologically "subsequent measure"). The word "measure" suggests an instrument (by which an object is measured, i.e., cognized). A source of knowledge is thereby indicated, whose characteristic essence is coordination. It is called subsequent measure, because it appears after the logical mark (or middle term) has been apprehended, and its concomitance (or major premise) has been brought to memory. When the presence of the mark upon the subject (i.e., minor premise) has been apprehended, and the concomitance between the minor and the major term, (i.e., the major premise) brought to memory, the inference (or conclusion) follows (ibid. II, p. 13).

Thus inference is defined as cognition of an object through its mark. Inference is also considered as the cognition of an invisible, concealed object. Inference enables us to cognize an object that is not present. In the definition given by Vasubandhu in his *Vādavidhi* he lays stress upon the observed inseparable connection uniting the mark with the inferred object. A person who has previously observed this inseparable connection between two occurrences, applies it to make a new inference. Thus when one has observed the inseparable causal tie uniting smoke with its cause fire, one cognizes the concealed fire whenever one finds the presence of smoke. It is evident that the inferential knowledge referred to by the Buddhist teachers is a kind of inductive knowledge based on the assumption that there is a uniformity of nature which entitles us to infer the unexperienced on the basis of generalizations from experience. We have already noticed that although the term *anumāna* was not used in the later technical sense in the Pali canonical literature, it expressed the notion of inferential knowledge based on experience in terms of *naye ñāṇam*, according to which one could use one's knowledge of an observed causal connection (*dhamme ñāṇa*) to infer that the same connection holds with respect to the past and future.

Later Buddhist logicians like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti introduced a number of refinements to the epistemological doctrines of Buddhism. One such notable refinement was the sharp distiction they made between direct and indirect knowledge. According to Dignāga's analysis of perception pure perceptual knowledge is non-constructive (*nirvikalpaka*).[17] According to the Buddhist teachers of the school of Dignāga, real sense-perception or cognition by the senses is only the first moment of perception. The function of sense perception is to make the object present to the senses. Its object is the particular thing (*svalakṣaṇa*). The construction of the image of the object whose presence has been made known is another function consisting of a subsequent operation of the understanding. Sense perception in itself is non-constructive and is followed by the construction of the image. Dignāga and his followers attempted to identify the pure sensational core of perception. We do not see such a treatment of perception in the early Buddhist teachings represented in the Pali Nikāyas. Although terms like *viññāṇa*, *saññā* and *vitakka* may be interpreted as representing several stages in the perceptual process, there is no attempt to distinguish them sharply from one another in the Pali canonical tradition.

Buddhist philosophers made a special attempt to establish the reality of what they understood as the sensational core of perception. One such attempt by Kamalaśīla is presented by Stcherbatsky in the following quotation from Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṅgraha-Pañjikā*:

> At the very first moment when an object is apprehended and it appears in its absolute particularity, a state of consciousness is produced which is pure sensation. It contains nothing of that content which is specified by a name. Thereupon, at a subsequent moment, when the same object has been attentively regarded, the attention deviates towards the conventional name with which it is associated. After that, after the object has been attentively regarded, according to its name, the idea of its (enduring) existence and other qualifications arise; we than fix it in a perceptual judgment.[18]

According to Dignāga a man who is absorbed in the contemplation of a patch of blue, perceives the blue, but he does not know that it is the blue.[19] What this suggests

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17. *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, I. 3.
18. *Buddhist Logic*, Vol. I, p. 152.
19. *Pramāṇasamuccaya Vṛtti*, I. 4.

is that pure perception is to be distinguished from the perceptual determination of the object which is a function of the understanding. According to this analysis in every cognition one part is sensible and the other is intelligible. The senses cognize the thing itself. It is the imagination (*kalpanā*) which constructs its relations and general characteristics.

The later Buddhist analysis of the nature of knowledge and reality was connected with the developments in the interpretations of fundamental Buddhist notions like the notion of impermanence and causality which played a central role in the early teachings of Buddhism. The early Buddhist idea of impermanence (*aniccatā*) was interpreted in later Buddhism in terms of a theory of momentariness (*kṣaṇavāda*). The later Buddhist theory of causation was also influenced by the theory of universal momentariness. Reality interpreted in terms of these two theories is reduced to point-instants of effeciency arising in functional dependence upon other point-instants. Real existence or ultimate existence is considered to be nothing but efficiency. Only the present moment of physical efficiency is ultimately real. The particular alone which is only the present, which is the 'here' and 'now' is real. Universals are unreal and are mere names. However, the later Buddhist teachers recognize another level of reality. When an image arising from the first moment of perceptual is objectivized and identified with some point of external reality it receives an imputed reality. Even from this special point of view there are real and unreal substances. From the point of view of these teachers, an example of a real substance at this level is some object like a cow. Examples of unreal substances are metaphysical ones like God, Soul and Matter (in the sense of the Primordial Matter of the Sāṅkhyas). The Buddhists of this period recognized two kinds of reality, the one pure of ultimate reality consisting of bare point instants, the other consisting of objectivized images. The latter is supposed to have a position in time and space and possess all the variety of sensible and abstract qualities. Thus a distinction was drawn between ultimate reality which is unrepresentable and unutterable (*anabhilāpya*) and phenomenal or empirical reality (*saṃvṛtisat*).

The treatment of epistemological issues in early Buddhism is confined to a clarification of the kind of knowledge essential for attaining the goal of the holy life. Early Buddhism insisted that what is essential for attaining such a goal is a kind of knowledge that has to be developed on the basis of an arduous process of self discipline. Ordinary sense knowledge at the level of *saññā* and *viññāṇa* and pure intellectual reason, faith and reliance on external authority are inadequate to bring about the self-transforming wisdom which is signified by the Buddhist terms *paññā* and *āsavakkhayañāṇa*. Early Buddhism did not take any interest in the argumentative discussion of general epistemological issues but was concerned with them only to the extent that such discussion was found to be relevant to its immediate goal. In this respect later Buddhism is notably different in that the Buddhist intellectual geniuses of later centuries, took up the argumentative discussion of epistemological issues as a general philosophical exercise. Many sophisticated ideas and theories emerged in the course of these discussions which could be compared with the finest intellectual achievements in Western philosophy.

P. D. Premasiri

EPITHETS of the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha and Nibbāna. Epithets characterising these four important topics in Buddhism are so numerous and varied that it would not only be tedious but also of little value to collect all of them. Therefore it is intended here to give a cross-section of them presenting them in such a way so that they would bring forth various aspects of the subject described. It may be noted here that, in general, the epithets describing these four topics are very often not synonyms but words referring to their different aspects.

Buddha:

At first when the literary descriptions of the Buddha were not numerous the number of epithets describing him were limited. But with the increase of Buddhist writings the writers went on inventing epithets to cover every possible aspect of his personality. The important aspects of his personality that have been covered by these epithets are mainly concerned with his intellectual and ethical eminence while there are many terms having metaphorical, allegorical and ancestral references.

The most general and the most important of these is the term Buddha (from the root *budh* to be awake) meaning an enlightened one. This is not a proper name but a generic term used to describe all those who are enlightened by themselves, without the help of any extraneous agency. In order to distinguish between the Buddhas and *pacceka-buddhas* the term *sāmmā*, *samyak* or *sam* is prefixed to the term Buddha which then means the perfectly enlightened one, who, by his self-realised knowledge of the Truth, is superior to all other beings both human and divine. Gautama Buddha is sometimes called the Buddhasettha or the Buddhavīra, meaning the best or the excellent Buddha. The term *arahant*, which is applied to anyone who has realised Nibbāna and meaning the one deserving (of respect etc.) is also applied to the Buddha in that sense. This is a pre-Buddhist honorific title adopted by the Buddhists. Some of the other epithets expressing his intellect or wisdom

Dogen was honoured and held in high esteem by his followers as an embodiment of the lofty principles of Zen training and discipline. He preferred solitude and meditation to constant travel and high company. His endeavour was to form small bands of sincere and zealous disciples.

In 1250 A.C. Emperor Go Saga conferred on him the title Buppo-Lenji and also presented him with a special robe as a mark of honour. In 1880 the title Shōyō Daishi was conferred on him posthumously. See JAPAN, ZEN.

S.K.N.

DOGMATISM. Dogmatism may be defined generally as a positive assertion of opinion, held to be true and irrefutable, with an unwillingness to modify or give up the opinion even when reasonable counter-evidence is brought against it. There are many related usages in English such as dogma, dogmatist, dogmatical etc., out of which the term "dogma" may be considered as primary and the others as usages derived from it. The English word dogma is a transliteration of a Greek word which means "that which seems good". The term in its original meaning has been used commendatorily. Greek authors applied it to the decrees of public authorities and to tenets of various philosophical schools. Plato used "dogma" in the Laws (887E – 888D) to mean a correct belief about the gods. In English the term "dogma" is used in the sense of a tenet or doctrine authoritatively laid down by a particular church, sect or school of thought. In a religious context and especially within the context of traditional Christian theology the term has been used to mean a body of opinion, formulated or authoritatively stated, a systematized belief or doctrinal system. In the context of Christian theology dogma is essentially the formulation of belief on the basis of the scriptures. The role of dogma, within traditional Christianity is considered to be the expression of the meaning of God's revelation in conceptual terms. Dogmatic definitions are supposed to express the truth with infallible accuracy and are in this sense believed to be unalterable.

The term "dogma" is also used in a condemnatory sense to mean an imperious or arrogant declaration of opinion. "Dogmatic" may also be explained as proceeding upon *a priori* principles accepted as true instead of being founded upon experience or induction. A system of philosophy based upon principles dictated by reasoning alone and not relying upon experience, and more generally, a way of thinking based upon principles which have not been tested by reflection or experience may, be called "dogmatism".

There is considerable evidence in the Buddhist tradition, especially in the stratum of literature represented by the Pali canonical scriptures that the concept of a dogma and the attitude referred to as dogmatism was very familiar to it. The Buddhist use of the terms *diṭṭhi* and *diṭṭhivāda* correspond very closely to the use of the term "dogma" in the English language. Pali Buddhist literature also talks about the attitude signified by the English term "dogmatism" by using such terms as "*upādāna*", "*abhinivesa*", "*ajjhosāna*" along with the term "*diṭṭhi*". The expression "*thāmasā parāmassa abhinivissa voharati*" which may be rendered as "speaks holding firmly and clinging dogmatically", occurs in the Pali *suttas* in contexts in which there is mention of the acceptance or assertion of philosophical tenets or religious doctrines (*diṭṭhi*) which are dogmatically held. Buddhism uses the term *diṭṭhi* and other terms and expressions which correspond to the English terms "dogma" and "dogmatism" more often in a condemnatory sense. In certain instances the Pali *suttas* use the term "*diṭṭhi*" with the prefixes *sammā* or *micchā* to make the distinction between *sammā-diṭṭhi* (right view) and *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong view).

The Pali term "*diṭṭhi*" and Sanskrit "*dṛṣṭi*" are both derived from the root *dṛś* "to see". The Pali Text Society dictionary gives the meanings, view, belief, dogma, theory and speculation to this term. The Buddha is often represented in the Pali *suttas* stating and classifying the numerous philosophical tenets or dogmas that were prevalent during his time. These dogmas are said to have been held by the two main groups who were engaged in a religious and philosophical quest, the recluses (*samaṇā*) and Brahmans (*brāhmaṇā*). In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* the Buddha enumerates sixty-two philosophical tenets along with the grounds on which they were held and claims that his teaching cannot be categorized under any of these dogmas. While expressing disagreement with the specific philosophical conclusion adopted by the proponents of these doctrines, the Buddha was particularly critical of the dogmatic stance that they adopted with respect to their philosophical tenets. Each proponent of a theory about the nature and destiny of man and the universe is said to have claimed that his theory alone was true and all other theories false (*Idam eva saccaṃ mogham aññaṃ*). This dogmatic

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various philosophical schools in the time of the Buddha. The Buddha calls them questions that he finds fit to be left aside (*ṭhapanīya*). They are also called "undetermined questions" (*avyākatāni*) because the Buddha thought that these questions ought to be left unanswered. The ten questions are :

1. Is the world eternal?
2. Is the world non-eternal?
3. Is the world finite?
4. Is the world infinite?
5. Are life and body identical?
6. Are life and body different?
7. Does the perfected person exist after death?
8. Does the perfected person not exist after death?
9. Is it the case that the perfected person both exists and does not exist after death?
10. Is it the case that the perfected person neither exists nor does not exist after death? (*M.* I, p. 426 f.; *D.* I, p. 190 f.).

The dogmatic attitude of those who committed themselves to a particular stand on these questions is described in the *suttas* and the Buddhist disapproval of such an attitude is expressed as follows:

"The world is eternal" is ... a dogma, it is a thicket of views, it is a desert of views, a puppet-show of views, a convulsion of views, a fetter of views (*M.* I, p. 485 f.).

According to the Buddha, clinging to any of these views dogmatically, is harmful to spiritual progress. The questions themselves are metaphysical ones and there is no conceivable way of checking the truth or falsity of a solution to them. The result is perpetual conflict among these who hold mutually contradictory positions. The Buddha saw no practical advantage at all in holding such opinions. According to the Buddha, they do not conduce to turning away from sense pleasures, to dispassion, to the cessation (of ill), to tranquillity, to higher knowledge, to enlightenment and to *Nibbāna* (*M.* I, p. 431 f.).

Not only do they not conduce to any practical spiritual upliftment of the individual, but also operate as a hindrance to a person's spiritual progress. The real *muni* (sage) does not take sides in the controversies pertaining to these dogmas. He is therefore said to be free from any mental obstruction.[3] It is always not the unprejudiced interest in the search for truth that impells people to hold certain philosophical opinions. The intentions of those who defend dogmatic positions could sometimes be malicious.[4] The opinions themselves could be the product of personal inclinations, likes, dislikes and interests. Clinging to dogmas becomes all the more tenacious because it is an expression of ones prejudices. According to the Buddha, when a person is led by impelling desire, and grasps a view depending on his inclination he finds it difficult to discard it.[5] One clings to such a view because one sees personal advantage in doing so.[6] According to the Buddha dogmas which are very enthusiastically defended are merely rationalizations of desires, inclinations, propensities, likes and dislikes.

Dogmatism inevitably engenders disputes. According to the *Paramaṭṭhaka Sutta*, a person who entertains a dogmatic view takes his own view as the most perfect and disparages the views of others.[7] The *Cūḷaviyūha Sutta* states the imperious and arrogant manner in which dogmatists assert their own doctrinal positions :

> Those who cling to their own views alone, come into dispute with others, each claiming expertise for himself saying : "One who understands this knows the truth; whoever rejects this is imperfect."[8]

3 *Vādaṁ ca jātaṁ muni no upeti — tasmā muni nāttḥi khilo kuhiñci* (*Sn.* v. 780).
4 *Vadanti ve duṭṭhamanā pi eke* (*Sn.* v. 780).
5 *Sakaṁ hi diṭṭhiṁ katham accayeyya—*
Chandānunīto ruciyā niviṭṭho (*Sn.* v. 781).
6 *Yadattani so passati ānisaṁsaṁ* (*Sn.* v. 784).
7 *Paraman ti diṭṭhīsu paribbāsāno — yad uttariṁ kurute jantu loke*
hīnāti aññe tato sabbam āha (*Sn.* v. 796).
8 *Sakaṁ sakaṁ diṭṭhi paribbosānā—*
viggayha nānā kusalā vadanti
Yo evaṁ jānāti sa vedi dhammaṁ
Idaṁ paṭikkosam akevalī so (*Sn.* v. 878).

The *Pasūra Sutta* mentions of public debates at which dogmatists attempted to argue in defence of their own views intent on emerging victorious :

> They who love debates enter a gathering and engage in contentious debates calling each other fools. They seek praise calling themselves experts.[9]

From the Buddhist point of view such controversy generates exactly the states of mind which hinder spiritual development. These disputes are not conducive to the mental calm and tranquillity necessary to see things in the proper perspective. One becomes depressed when one is defeated in debate. When one fails to defeat the arguments of others one becomes enraged.[10] Elation and depression are the two-fold result of disputation based on dogmatic views, and both these psychological conditions are harmful to spiritual progress. According to the Buddha, the elation in a person who emerges victorious in debate itself becomes the ground of his spiritual downfall. For it is nothing but an expression of his pride and arrogance.[11] Dogmatism leads to intolerance and fanaticism. Therefore the dogmatist is incapable of being free from conflict and the associated evils.

Buddhism considered dogmatism as an expression of a natural, deep-rooted, innate, proclivity of the human mind. The proclivity to cling to a view is mentioned as one of the dormant tendencies (*anusaya*) of the mind. *Diṭṭhānusaya* (dormant tendency to cling to views) is on equal footing with other dormant tendencies like *rāgānusaya* (dormant tendency to be lustful) and *paṭighānusaya* (dormant tendency to be hateful). Dogmatism is a by-product of *moha* (delusion or confusion), one of the three roots of evil or unskill. It is an unskilled state of mind that has to be eradicated for the attainment of the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Clinging to dogma is also mentioned among the four types of clinging which are produced by craving (*diṭṭhupādāna*). It is sometimes referred to as a passion, equally strong as the passion for sensuous things. Dogmatists who come into conflict, clinging to their own dogmas are said to be deeply and passionately attached to their own views (*sandiṭṭhirāgena hi te'bhirattā*). Dogmatism is also referred to as an intoxicant (*āsava*), which has to be eradicated to attain arahantship.

The Buddha points out that even if a person gives up his view he does so by grasping another.[12] He is like a monkey who lets go one branch only to cling to another.[13] This is so because of the deep-rooted nature of the human proclivity to dogmatism.

Dogmatism, according to Buddhism, is a mark of imperfection. The person with spiritual excellence does not hold on to mentally constructed views.[14] The perfected person in Buddhism is described in the following terms :

> They do not speculate, they do not esteem any views and say "This is the highest purity". They release the knot of dogmatic clinging and do not long for anything in the world.[15]

The *Māgandhiya Sutta* of the *Suttanipāta*, describing the liberation of the Buddha says :

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9 *Te vādakāmā parisaṃ vigayha*
bālaṃ dahanti mithu aññamaññaṃ
.....
pasaṃsa kāmā kusalā vadānā (*Sn.* v. 825).

10 *Yutto kathāyam parisāya majjhe*
pasaṃsam icchaṃ vinighāti hoti
apāhatasmiṃ pana mañku hoti
nindāya so kuppati randham esī (*Sn.* v. 826).

11 *Yā unnati sā'ssa vighātabhūmi*
mānātimāṇaṃ vadate pan'eso (*Sn.* v. 830).

12 *Nirassati ādiyaticca dhammaṃ* (*Sn.* v. 785).

13 *Te uggahīyanti nirassajanti*
kapīva sākhaṃ pamukhaṃ gahāya (*Sn.* v. 791).

14 *Dhonassa hi natthi kuhiñci loke*
Pakappitā diṭṭhi bhavābhavesu (*Sn.* v. 786).

15 *Na kappayanti na purekkharonti*
Accantasuddhīti na te vadanti
ādānagantham gathitaṃ visajja
āsaṃ na kubbanti kuhiñci loke (*Sn.* v. 794).

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To him who is free from attachment to ideas there are no ties. To him who is freed through wisdom there are no delusions. Those who grasp ideas and dogmas, wander about coming into conflict in the world.[16]

The liberation of the Buddhist saint is not merely a liberation from the sensuous things of the world but also from ideology, clinging to which leads inevitably to conflict.

The Brāhmaṇa (noble one) having learnt of diverse theories that have arisen among others, is indifferent to them, whilst others embrace them.

The sage freeing himself from worldly ties, does not take sides in controversies that arise. He is peaceful among those who are restless. He remains equanimous without embracing views while others embrace them.[17]

In the *Dīghanakha Sutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya* there is mention of three types of attitude to views said to have been held by recluses and brahmans:

(1) I agree with every view (*sabbaṃ me khamati*)
(2) I agree with no view (*sabbaṃ me nakkhamati*)
(3) I agree with some views and disagree with others (*ekaccaṃ me khamati ekaccaṃ me na khamati*)

The Buddha praises the second point of view as tending towards dispassion, lack of bondage, excitement, dogmatism and clinging (*asārāgāya santike asaṃyogāya . . . anabhinandanāya . . . anajjhosānāya . . . anupadānāya santike*), whereas the first and third views are not favoured because they have the opposite tendency. Dīghanakha who opened the discussion on the subject with the Buddha claimed to hold the second view and was gladened by the Buddha's remark that the second position is praiseworthy. Those who took the second position were understood as those who did not commit themselves to any view. But the Buddha hastens to point out that Dīghanakha's position could itself become a dogma. For if one dogmatically holds the view "I agree with no view" it can have the same consequence as taking any other dogmatic position. Therefore, with respect to all three types of views mentioned in the *Dīghanakha Sutta*, if one firmly holds, and dogmatically asserts, that any one of these theories is correct and the others false, (*imaṃ diṭṭhiṃ thāmasā parāmassa abhinivissa vohareyya.ṃ idam eva saccaṃ mogham aññanti*) one is likely to engage in contentious debate (*D.* I, p. 499). As in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta*, here too, the Buddha sees the result of debate as dispute (*vivādo*) vexation (*vighāto*) and worry (*vihesā*). The Buddha's advice is to eliminate dogmatism altogether and to cultivate an attitude of equanimity and indifference towards all views.

Although Buddhism considers the dogmatic grasping of *diṭṭhi* as a hindrance to spiritual progress, it recommends *sammādiṭṭhi* (right view) as the first step in its eightfold path. *Sammādiṭṭhi* is contrasted with *micchādiṭṭhi* (wrong view). The first category of *micchādiṭṭhi* recognized in Buddhism consists of those theories which have certain specific harmful consequences. As enumerated in the Pali canonical *suttas*, they include a nihilistic world view involving the rejection of the reality of this world, the world beyond, and moral values such as caring for parents, the karmic efficacy of good and bad conduct, and the fruitfulness of leading a religious life. Secondly, there are the speculative views such as those enumerated in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* which are referred to as *diṭṭhigata*. The third is the most basic and universal wrong view referred to as *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*.

According to the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya*, *Sammādiṭṭhi* involves the comprehension of (1) the distinction between good and bad and their bases (*kusala, akusala, kusalamūla, akusalamūla*) (2) the nutrients (*āhara*) of life along with their origin, cessation and the path to their cessation, (3) the four noble truths, and (4) the twelve factors

16 *Saññā virattassa na santi ganthā*
paññā vimuttassa na santi mohā
saññañ ca diṭṭhiñ ca ye aggahesuṃ
te ghaṭṭayantā vicaranti loke (*Sn.* v. 847).

17 *ñatvā ca so* (*brāhmaṇo*) *sammutiyo puthujjā*
upekkhati uggahananta-m-aññe
Visajja ganthāni munīdha loke
vivādajātassa na vaggasārī
Santo asantesu upekkhako so
anuggaho uggahananta-m-aññe (*Sn.* vv. 911–912).

of the law of causal genesis (*paticcasamuppāda*). In brief what Buddhism refers to as *sammādiṭṭhi* is its pragmatic ideology, the sole concern of which is the liberation of man from *dukkha* (unsatisfactoriness). It is claimed that this ideology avoids the two speculative extremes of the dogma of eternalism (*sassatavāda*) and the dogma of annihilationism (*ucchedavāda*). The Buddha explicitly exhorts his disciples not to cling even to this pragmatic ideology which he presents in the form of *sammādiṭṭhi*, for such clinging could itself be a hindrance to the attainment of the Buddhist goal.

In the *Alagaddūpama Sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* the Buddha exhorts his disciples not to learn the *dhamma* for the benefit of defending a dogma (*itivādapamokkhānisaṃsaṃ*) or for the benefit of disparaging, or finding fault with, others (*upārambhānisaṃsaṃ : M.* I, p. 133). The *dhamma* should be handled in the way a cobra should be, for if a cobra is grasped by its tail and not by its neck, it will turn round and harm the person who grasped it. According to the admonition of the Buddha, his *dhamma* should be studied and understood only for a specific practical purpose. Like clinging to any other dogma, clinging to the *dhamma* will have the same harmful consequences of feeding one's conceit, self-esteem and attachment and thereby engender conflict within one's self and in society. In the simile of the raft, the Buddha advises his disciples to treat the *dhamma* as a raft for the purpose of crossing over from a condition of suffering to a condition of non-suffering (*kullūpamaṃ vo dhammaṃ desessāmi nittharaṇatthāya no gahaṇatthāya*). Neither in the process of fulfilling the *dhamma's* purpose nor after fulfilling it should it be clung to as a dogma. Even the wholesome doctrines (*dhammā*) which the Buddha conceived to produce beneficial results are not to be grasped dogmatically. "How much more," the Buddha asks, "should one refrain from clinging dogmatically to wrong doctrines." (*ājānantehi dhammā pi pahātabbā, pageva adhammā : M.* I, p. 135).

It is in the light of this pragmatist approach of Buddhism that the Buddhist teachings in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* are to be understood. The *Aṭṭhakavagga* is undoubtedly a collection which contains the core teachings of Buddhism, which belonged to the earliest stratum of the Buddhist tradition. Most *suttas* included in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* lay repeated emphasis on the point that to present any thesis at all as an assertion of absolute truth is to display one's innate tendency to dogmatism. It is repeatedly described as a mark of spiritual immaturity. The noble one who has transcended the confines of narrow dogmas does not grasp anything as the absolute truth (*sīmātigo brāhmaṇo . . . tasmiddha. natthi paro uggahītaṃ : Sn. v.* 795). He has no dogma to defend, for it does not occur to him "I assert this" (*Sn. v.* 837). *Sammādiṭṭhi* in Buddhism is not intended to be the correct sixty-third view (*diṭṭhi*) opposed to the sixty-two wrong views that already existed. It should, therefore, according to the Buddha, not lead to dogmatism.

The noble ones confidently affirm the inward peace they have attained (*ajjhattasanti* : ibid). But they make no assertion characterizing the nature of absolute truth, for to make such an assertion is to fall within "Brahma's net" (*brahmajāla*). It is this inward peace that the Buddha maintains as the one truth realizing which people do not engage in debate (*ekaṃ hi saccaṃ na dutiyam atthi—yasmiṃ pajā no vivade pajānaṃ : Sn. v.* 884). The many and diverse truths asserted dogmatically by those who claim themselves to be experts (*kusalā vadānā*) are, according to the Buddha, invalid generalizations made on the basis of their own perceptions (*saññā*) coloured by their deep-rooted prejudices (*na hete saccānī bahūnī nānā - aññatra saññāya niccānī loke : Sn. v.*886).

The Buddha's attitude towards dogmatism is also expressed in his critique of two principal sources of "knowledge" on which truth claims of some of his contemporaries were based. The Buddha did not favour an attitude of total reliance upon authority, whether it is the authority of a revealed tradition (*anussava*) or of a scriptural tradition (*piṭakasampadā*) or a venerated person (*samaṇo no garu : M.* I, p. 189). If such authoritative assertions conflict with what is in fact the case, which is ultimately a matter to be determined by inter-subjective experimental observation, those assertions should be rejected. The same applies to reason as well. For what is consistently reasoned out may also conflict with observable facts.

However, some scholars contend that the attitude recommended in Buddhism towards the teachings of the Buddha is one of uncritical acceptance. According to Kern, "Buddhism is . . . a superhuman (*uttarīmanussa*) Law, founded upon the decrees of an omniscient and infallible Master."[18] Poussin says,

18 Quoted in K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1963, pp. 376–377.

It is reasonable to conclude that Buddhism in its original form was not in favour of characterizing reality according to any absolutist description. According to the Buddha such characterizations of reality result only in promoting dogmatic attitudes resulting in ideological conflicts. The Buddhist statements about reality were determined essentially by a strong pragmatic concern. The principal concern of original Buddhism was the achievement of a specific result, namely, liberation from suffering. This is the reason for the repeated emphasis of the Buddha, that he lays down nothing but the existence of ill and its cessation (*dukkhañ c'āhaṃ paññāpemi dukkhassa ca nirodhaṃ*). It is important to note that this emphasis occurs particularly in instances where attempts were made to drag the Buddha to commitment to some absolutist position regarding the nature of reality. In consistency with this attitude the Buddha warned his disciples against taking his own teaching as a dogma. However, the dogmatic attitudes reflected within Buddhism itself may be accompaniments in the progressive development of Buddhology and religious ideology. Any doctrine which happens to be accepted by a community of adherents has the tendency to end up as a system of dogmas, and the history of Buddhism has shown that Buddhism has not been an exception to this.

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DOMANASSA, generally rendered into English as distress, dejection, melancholy, grief, is one of the five types of feeling (*vedanā*, q.v.).

Domanassa is mental pain, (*cetasikaṃ dukkhaṃ, cetasikaṃ asātaṃ*, *S.V.*, p. 209; *Nd.* p. 312; cf. *D.* II, p. 306, *Nett.* p. 12) in contrast to physical pain (*kāyikaṃ dukkhaṃ kāyikaṃ asātaṃ*, *D.* II, p. 305; *M.* I, p. 302; *sārīrikā dukkhā vedanā* : *A.* II, p. 143). However the texts also note the connection between these two types of feelings in certain instances. Thus the *Peṭakopadesa* (pp. 118, 25) cites physical pain as a cause of mental pain, and conversely the *Visuddhimagga* (p. 504) points out how one undergoes physical pain as a result of mental pain.

The direct opposite of *domanassa* is *somanassa*, meaning mental happiness, gladness. The term *appaccaya* (=dissatisfaction) is synonymous with *domanassa* (*D.* I, p. 3; *DA.* I, p. 52).

In the *nikāyas* there is also the usage of *domanassa* in combination with *abhijjhā* (covetousness : *M.* I, p. 340; III, p. 2; *A.* II, p. 16). The well known *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (*D.* II, p. 290; *M.* I, p. 55) speaks of getting rid of *abhijjhādomanassa*. Perhaps due to its combination with the term *abhijjhā* the term *domanassa* has acquired a sense somewhat different to its original meaning. The commentaries to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (*MA.* I, p. 244) equate *abhijjhā* with *kāmacchanda* (desire for sense pleasures) and *domanassa* with *vyāpāda* (ill-will). Emphasising this equation the commentaries say that by naming the two strongest constituents of the five mind defiling hindrances (*pañcanīvaraṇa*) this statement refers to the eradication of all the five hindrances. It is also seen that when coupled with *abhijjhā*, *domanassa* is often referred to as an evil, unwholesome state (of the mind, *pāpakā akusalā dhammā*, *M.* I, p. 180; *A.* II, p. 16).

It is apparent that this equation of *domanassa* with *vyāpāda* is possible only by a stretch of meaning. As the *Peṭakopadesa* (p. 251) points out, hatred (*dosa*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda*) arise from thoughts pertaining to *domanassa* (*domanassopavicāra*), and as such all these mental states are more correlated than being identical. Hatred and ill-will are not necessary corollaries of *domanassa* for, in some instances, there could be *domanassa* without these.

A more general explanation of the term *domanassa* is found in the *Majjhimanikāya* (III, 218). Therein it is pointed out that *domanassa* could arise from the failure to obtain desirable objects sought after by the senses or from recalling the previous enjoyment of such desirable objects which are no longer available. The *Visuddhimagga* (pp. 461, 504) quotes the *Majjhimanikāya* in its definition of *domanassa*. *Peṭakopadesa* (p. 118) points out the possibility of *domanassa* arising from bodily pain. *Mohavicchedanī* (p. 11) corroborates the *Visuddhimagga* definition. From all these definitions it is seen that there is general agreement on the point that *domanassa* arises when one experiences an unpleasant feeling which is contrary to one's desires and expectations.

Repugnance (*paṭigha*) seems to be the general condition that arises in the mind when afflicted by *domanassa*. Due to *domanassa* the mind could become vexed, dejected, grieved or even crippled. Depending on the cause of *domanassa* and the consequent pondering over it (*Pet.* p. 251) a positive feeling of hatred and ill-will also could arise. In its intense form *domanassa* may manifest as a serious pathological condition of the mind (*mānasavyādhi* : *Vism.* p. 504).

"Buddhism is a faith and a creed, a respectful and close adhesion to the word of the one Omniscient." (ibid. p. 378). Keith also appears to agree with Kern and Poussin on this matter.[19] Oldenberg, Rhys Davids and Radhakrishnan believe that Buddhism uncritically accepted the dogmas of the prevalent Brahmanical tradition. K. N. Jayatilleke disagrees with these scholars contending that their conclusions are a result of a lack of a historical perspective in interpreting the Buddhist teachings. He points out that the doctrines of rebirth and karma, were accepted in Buddhism not merely as an inheritance from the past tradition. According to him, Buddhism arose at a time when neither the acceptance of these theories was widespread nor when the theories were of great antiquity. Besides they were subject to question by influential materialist schools of thought and the elite or independent thinkers of the Buddha's time.

Some scholars have also argued that Buddhism is an authoritarian creed on the ground that the Buddha was considered to be omniscient. Jayatilleke points out that omniscience was not attributed to the Buddha in the early stratum of the Pali canonical literature. On the contrary, the Buddha is represented as disclaiming omniscience and explicitly claiming only three types of higher knowledge (*tevijjā*). The three types of higher knowing were not considered to be an exclusive possession of the Buddha. They were believed to have been acquired by numerous disciples of the Buddha, and excluding the third, *āsavakkhayañāṇa* (knowledge of the elimination of the intoxicants) the others were admitted to be attainable by anyone cultivating the meditative mind even outside the Buddhist fold.

Jayatilleke observes that within the canonical literature itself a later stratum is noticeable, according to which a wide gap is recognized between the knowledge of the Buddha and the knowledge of the arahant. In his opinion, the concept of a *paññā-vimutta* (one emancipated by intellectual knowledge alone) developed during this period. With this development the role of *saddhā* in Buddhism also changed. Jayatilleke says : "It is possible that this new conception of *saddhā* was accompanied by a dogmatism which condemned the free inquiry which the earlier attitude was based on and encouraged." (Jayatilleke, op. cit. p. 400).

K. N. Jayatilleke has good grounds to maintain that according to at least one stratum of the Pali canonical *suttas* the place assigned to faith in Buddhism is conspicuously different from that assigned to it in theistic religions. Dogmas in theistic religions are to be accepted with unquestioning faith. Although Buddhism recognizes the significance of faith in the sense of confidence in the efficacy of the teaching or confidence in the reliability of the teacher, dogmatic acceptance of anything as the sole truth merely on the basis of faith is not encouraged. According to the *Caṅkī Sutta*, if one has faith, it is reasonable for him to say "such is my faith" (*evaṃ me saddhā hoti*), but not to dogmatically conclude "this alone is the truth and everything else is false" (*idam eva saccaṃ mogham aññaṃ*: *M.* II, p. 171). In the *Vīmaṃsaka Sutta* the Buddha even welcomes his disciples to inquire into the genuineness of his claim to have become an enlightened and morally perfect being. He invites them to test him by observing his behaviour to find out whether his bodily conduct which can be visually observed and his verbal conduct which can be auditorily observed is of such a nature that he could be accused of having a greedy, hateful or deluded disposition (*M.* I, p. 317 f.). The standard Buddhist expression of this non-dogmatic attitude is found in the *Kālāma Sutta* of the *Aṅguttaranikāya* where the Buddha explicitly rejects authority and reason, in favour of experiential observation. The Buddha's advice is not to cling to a dogma, but to have the insight necessary for liberation (*diṭṭhiñ ca anupagamma sīlavā dassanena sampanno*).

It is evident that Buddhological speculation, of which some traces are to be found in the later stratum of the Pali canonical tradition itself and which progressively developed in later Buddhist literature of the Northern schools of Buddhism widened the gap between the knowledge of the Buddha and the attainment of the *arahat* until this gap became unbridgeable and the goal of arahantship itself was much depreciated. It is in this light that Keith's following quotation from *Ratnakūṭa*, presented as evidence for the conclusion that Buddhism is a faith and creed has to be understood :

> Here the Tathāgata alone is my witness, the Tathāgata knows, I do not know; boundless is the enlightenment of the Buddhas.[20]

19 A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy* Chowkhamba Sanskrit Studies, Varanasi, India, 1963, p. 33 f.

20 Quoted by A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 36.